

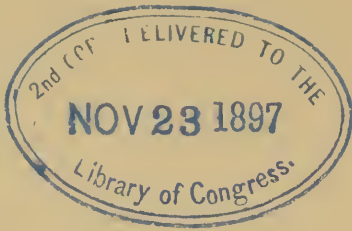
PS

658

C55



Sixty
and Six



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.

~~PS658~~
Chap. Copyright No.

Shelf C 55

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.





MIDWINTER—THE SLOPE OF THE HILL

Drawn by HOMER E. KEYES

SIXTY AND SIX

CHIPS FROM LITERARY WORKSHOPS

EDITED BY

WILL M. CLEMENS

Author of "The Life of Mark Twain," "Famous Funny
Fellows," "Songs of To-morrow," Etc., Etc.

NEW AMSTERDAM BOOK COMPANY
156 : FIFTH : AVENUE : NEW : YORK



6402403-2
S

TWO COPIES RECEIVED

> P.

PS658
C55

COPYRIGHT, 1895-1896-1897.

BY WILL, M. CLEMENS.

All rights reserved.

(Entered at Stationer's Hall, London.)

CONTENTS

1. IN THE RAJAH'S PALACE . Herbert Ware.
2. THE DUEL Helen Leavenworth Herrick.
3. PORTIA Anthony Leland.
4. THE EDGE OF NOWHERE . Will M. Clemens.
5. LAVINIA'S NAPKINS . . Louis How.
6. THE DUKE OF JAPONSKI . Andrew Millard.
7. PANSIES, OR PANSIES? . Edgarda Williams.
8. IN EXTREMIS J. H. Kennedy.
9. THE MAIDEN OF THE VAL-
LEY Marye Thornburg.
10. ORVILLE AND HIS GUITAR . Merritt Post.
11. THE ETERNAL STRUGGLE . Emily B. Stone.
12. A DREAM OF YESTERDAY . John Northern Hilliard.
13. THE LIVING DEATH . . E. Meserve James.
14. A HUMAN SPARK . . . Will M. Clemens.
15. FOUND IN AN OLD BIBLE . Annie Weston Whitney.
16. THE PASSION FLOWER . Helen Leavenworth Herrick.
17. DEATH AND DOLLS . . . Georgia Harriet Pangborn.
18. THE SUICIDE Frances A Hoadley.
19. A WIFE Elizabeth C. Cardozo.
20. THE WORM TURNETH . . Harry Saint-Maur.
21. A PRIEST Anthony Leland.
22. JEREMY'S CONSOLATION . Charles F. Howell.
23. VENUS OF MILO Albert Bigelow Paine.
24. A MOCKERY Will M. Clemens.
25. THE JAPANESE COLLECTOR Lee J. Vance.
26. REPENTANCE Elizabeth C. Cardozo.
27. THE SOCIETY Louis How.
28. OTHMAN THE TURK . . . Herbert Ware.
29. THE MOUND BUILDER . . Georgia Harriet Pangborn.
30. HEART THOUGHTS . . . Eloise Gray.
31. THE NIGHTMARE Will M. Clemens.
32. A DEMON OF THE DEPTHS James H. Griffes.
33. THE BREATH OF LIFE . . Lyman Horace Weeks.
34. AT THE MEADOW BARS . . Percie W. Hart.
35. THE SIEGE OF PARIS . . Paul Mahalin

36. FROM GUILLOTINE TO
GLORY Will Hubbard Kernan.
37. THE NUN James Knapp Reeve.
38. HIS LITTLE BOOTS Will M. Clemens.
39. A LOST LETTER Harry Saint-Maur.
40. THE JOURNAL A. E. Brickell.
41. SPOKEN M G. Robinson.
42. AT THE OPERA Abbie Farwell Brown.
43. THE VALLEY OF DISMAL
POOLS W. R. A. Wilson.
44. A MAN AND A WOMAN Will M. Clemens.
45. TWO ENDS OF A PROPOSI-
TION Harry Saint-Maur.
46. UNMASKED Ernest Peabody.
47. THE STRANGER Emily B. Stone.
48. AS IT IS William Forsyth.
49. THE BACHELOR Will M. Clemens.
50. SOULS KNOW Eleanor B. Caldwell.
51. YOUTH Carlotta Perry.
52. THE PANAMA RAILROAD Mark Twain.
53. AS IN A DREAM Frank M. Weeks.
54. THE MONKS James Knapp Reeve.
55. THE EXECUTION Will M. Clemens.
56. A PHANTASMAL WORLD Ella Sterling Cummins.
57. THE LEGEND OF THE CROSS Ruth Ward Kahn.
58. FAITH RENEWED Herbert Ware.
59. THE PERVERSITY OF LOVE Ernest Peabody.
60. ANSWERED Claudia Stuart Coles.
61. THE ISLAND OF WINE Philip Verrill Mighels.
62. THE LULLABY C. F. Lester.
63. JEM Kathryn Jarboe.
64. AS IT WAS Ernest Peabody.
65. THE OPTIMIST Will M. Clemens.
66. FIFINE Harry Saint-Maur.





In the Rajah's Palace

THE beautiful Queen lay ill. All the long hot afternoon a strange silence filled the palace ; men moved about softly, looking with fear into each other's eyes ; and even the little pages let their hair hang quiet on their shoulders, and crouched in the shady court, hearkening to the water as it fell in the fountain. No need would there have been to-day for the Queen to check their quarrelling.

But she, forgetful of them, was lying in the upper western chamber, in that darkened room, which turns the heart sick with dread when the loved one enters it.

Beside her sat her lord, at last forgetting taxes and his skillful cheetah. Around the couch the slave-girls watched, and sang at times, but softly, for the Queen was weary. And when the day was gone they drew aside the curtains to let her see again the beloved mountains against the darkening sky. And as she looked on those immovable white summits rising beyond the dusty plains, peaks that had greeted her troubled heart each night since she had come a bride out of the south-land, the Queen grew rested, and laughed, the low, sweet laugh of her childhood. Among the girls there ran a shudder of relief, a rippling sound of clinking silver, as when a soldier in hiding after the Dacoits pass rattles his weapon, loosening his grasp.

Then sang a girl the evening song of the maids as
they bathe in the tank by the temple:

O, Sweet and Bitter ; O, Bitter and Sweet ;
O, life, so full of delay !
O, distant hills, ye are blue and fair,
Though the lowlands waste in decay.

O, idle Youth ; O, restless Age ;
O, wide and voiceless stream,
Wending in thy winding course,
Is thy long-sought sea a dream ?

She ended, and there was stillness. A breath of the
night crept chill through the room. Then there came
up from the city below the voice of a woman calling
her child ; the Queen opened her eyes and smiled, a little
trembling smile, and closed her eyes again, and the river
had found the sea.

HERBERT WARE.





The Duel

“SHE would and she would not.”
The evil, that was a part of her, imbued her with the desire of all that was akin to its own corruption.

The good, that was a part of her, inspired with longing for a scheme of life in accordance with its own purity.

“Love — duty? Duty — love?”

A thousand little angels and a thousand little devils whispered the words to her.

Sometimes it seemed as if it were the devils that said “Duty!” and the angels that whispered “Love!” Then it was just the other way and the angels murmured “Duty!” while the devils cried “Love!”

She stood before the mirror and viewed her fair reflection, with half-closed eyes. The lights burned dimly, her surroundings, wrapped in soft shadow, seemed at last to fade away entirely.

She was as one in a trance, between life and death.

And there was nothing in all the world save darkness, the pale face and burning eyes that looked into hers from the mirror, and her persistent companions, the little angels and the little devils.

Her strength left her, yet she forced herself to stand, unable to withdraw her gaze from her own reflected eyes that stared at her intently, fixedly, maddeningly.

A thought of hope came to comfort her.

She would try an experiment; she would hypnotize herself, and whatever was the stronger part of her nature would rule the weaker.

Would it be good or evil?

The opposing elements in her soul fought for supremacy. It was a hypnotic duel, a fierce struggle between two forceful antagonists battling in one human being.

Her eyes glowed like coals of fire and then, in turn, shone like stars of light.

A thousand little thought-angels awaited the signal to chant a hymn of victory and a thousand little thought-devils awaited the signal to screech a pæan of triumph.

And good sought to subdue evil.

And evil fought to conquer good.

At last the duel ended, and that which was the stronger part of her nature became her soul's master, guided her will, decided her future.

But which was victorious—Good or Evil, Love or Duty?

HELEN LEAVENWORTH HERRICK.





Dortia

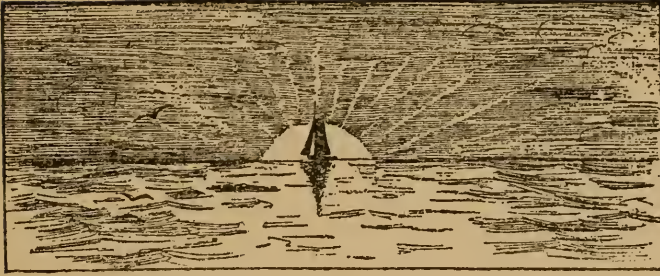
THE shadows in the corners are deepening and growing mysterious, a drowsy fire flickers upon the hearth, while outside the window a grey half-light steals over the desolate autumnal garden, and on a level with my eyes, as I lounge in my great chair, I see a band of cold red sky, against which the bare branches of the elm trees weave strange, clear-cut arabesques. The November twilight drifts into night, and in the pleasant melancholy of that hour my soul sinks into the past. Some one in a distant room is playing softly "Auf wiedersehn," and as the air of that sweet old song touches my ear, I see another room than that in which I sit a-dreaming—an oid-fashioned room with mullioned windows, through which the pale light of an autumn gloaming of long ago gleams feebly, and a young girl clad in a clinging gown of white wool sits there in the gathering gloom, and plays idly that same tender tune—"Auf wiedersehn," and I lean over her and lose myself in the swimming glories of her dark eyes, which are fixed upon a print of St. Cecilia upon the wall above my head. It is Edith—Edith, whose fathomless eyes seems to enfold and to bewilder one after all these years, and the tones of whose voice, like low, sweet, chiming bells, echo even yet in my heart. Pale, dark-eyed, red-lipped Edith—so fair, so gentle, and so false. Ah me! She did make me suffer—until Kitty came. Laughing, curly headed, impudent little Kitty. How well I remember that first night when she tripped out behind the flaring footlights of the old Globe Theatre. What life, what abandon, what diablerie was there! And what passion! My hands grew eagerly

feverish, and my breath comes quickly as I see a vision of that shining head and those wickedly glittering eyes so full of daring challenge as they gleam into my face from out the shadowy past. Life was well worth the living then, even if she did make a fool of me, as she did, I suppose. Every one said so, and I had a glimmering sense of it myself when the end came, and she flitted gibingly away from me with Old Maxwell, who was sixty odd, blue-lipped, tottering and worth a million. Ah, well! It was paradise while it lasted, Kitty, and luck be with you in whatever pathway your twinkling wayward feet have carried you. And then, I remember, I stole away to Essie for comfort—fair-haired, long-suffering Essie, with caressing voice and gently drooping mouth.

The strains of "Auf wiedersehn" have died away, the corners of my room have quite disappeared in the gloom, and I hear a soft footfall coming toward me. It is Portia! I hear her pass across the floor, and come quite close to me, so close that I feel the gentle pressure of one little foot against my own. I know that she is looking with calm, inscrutable eyes into my face, but I am selfishly happy in that past in which she has no part, and I keep my eyes upon the now dead western sky, and pretend not to know that she is by my side. I feel her imperious touch upon my arm, but make no sign, and then she passes with slow grace behind me, and soon I feel her velvet face against my own, and her warm breath brushes my neck. Then, I surrender, and bidding those unedifying shapes of a dead past begone, I pluck her from my shoulder and place her upon my knees, where she purrs softly, and blinks her green eyes contentedly at the firelight on the walls.

Well, well! I am one and seventy now, and Portia does very well, I suppose.

ANTHONY LELAND.



The Edge of Nowhere

THROUGHOUT the hot, dreary day they plodded westward. Above them hung the sky, a solid field of blue. Beneath them, the yellow of the sand and the bronze of the sage brush, formed a dull brown waste as wide and as long as the field of blue above. The very air seemed dead like the animal and plant life all about them. Nothing but the sage brush and the sand.

They plodded on, following the sun's wake. The horses, with drooping heads, moved like the snails. The white cover of the old wagon seemed a drifting ghost on the desert. Within, Mary sat motionless, silent—her breath coming in short gasps. Upon her breast the babe slept peacefully, for babes seem always sleeping.

Jason walked by the side of the off horse. He simply plodded, drooping and spiritless, like his horses. There were no flies to drive away from the flanks of the tired beasts, for even the flies had left the desert forever.

The day waned and slower moved the little caravan. Jason's back bent low, Mary's face was drawn with pain. The horses dragged along even slower than the snails. The babe slept on.

As the sun sank, the blue of the sky became a deeper, darker blue.

A joyful cry suddenly escaped Jason's lips. Far ahead he saw something on the desert—a tree—perhaps a well. Hopeful, they plodded on. There came a faint smile to Mary's pale face. Jason appeared to have been born again. The jaded horses, too, awoke and walked now instead of dragging themselves along.

The man, the woman, the beasts, longed for water. Not the babe—for the babe still slept.

The little caravan drew near the thing on the desert. Jason rushed forward and found a tree and a well—a dry well. And there upon the plain, under the ribbon shadow of the tree, they found the ruins of a wagon, the skeletons of men and horses—wield finger-posts in this unknown land.

A wave of ghastly silence swept upon them.

Jason looked at Mary and Mary looked at him. They bowed their heads upon their breasts. The horses fell upon the hot sand. The babe awoke with a cry of pain.

Then the everlasting night closed in about them and the moonlight danced among the dead.

WILL M. CLEMENS.





Lavinia's Napkins

After Miss Mary E. Wilkins

LAVINIA sat alone in her tidy kitchen, sewing. She had made everything clean, and a kettle of water-gruel for her supper bubbled on the stove. Three white stone plates, with gilt edges, shone on the dresser. They were her Sunday china; she was very poor. Nine square inches of neatly cleaned rag-carpet were spread under her stiff-backed chair. She was dressed in a simple blue-check calico, bought at a fair ten years ago. Her hair was drawn straight from her forehead; she was a seamstress. One yellow "consider" lily was in a glass on the table; she had gotten it in the woods that morning.

Lavinia had had toast for dinner, her first dinner in three days, and she was feeling contented and happy.

"I reckon I'll finish this napkin by summer," she said to herself; it was one of her wedding napkins.

There were a dozen of them, all covered with the same intricate pattern and bordered with a wreath of arbutus. Seven were already finished. Usually they took some time to do. Lavinia's work did not leave her much chance to sew for herself.

Lavinia's eyes were pale blue and very weak. But her lips were still red and full, and her cheeks had not gotten much paler. Her hair was almost white now. She had been engaged to Silas Jenkins for thirty-three years this February.

"I dunno when we'll git married," she had said to Mis' Murray at Christmas; "times is so awful hard."

But it was beginning to be considered a long engagement.

As she sat there now, quietly stitching, and wondering whether she could afford to keep a cat, there came a tap at the door. Lavinia slowly got up. She was very much surprised. Silas never had come but on Sunday. Yet this was a man's tap. She folded her napkin with her thimble inside, put it on the table, and went to the door. As she opened it, she said, "Wipe your feet, please."

Horatio Martin was there; he was her cousin. Lavinia asked him in, and offered him the chair. There was only one. Horatio would not sit down; he was very tall.

"Nice weather we're havin'," he said.

"Yes," answered Lavinia, looking out the window, over the patched white muslin curtain.

"S'pose you heard of Silas's death," said Horatio.

Lavinia looked steadily at him. Her lips and cheeks became white. She put one hand on the back of the chair.

"No," she said, faintly, "I hadn't. When did——" She paused here; she had gotten very pale.

"Apoplexy," said Horatio.

Lavinia made a strong effort, and walked to the table. She got her napkin and came and sat down.

"You better stay to supper," she said; "I got some real nice gruel." She put on her thimble.

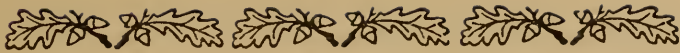
"I reckon I'll give my napkins to Hetty. She's only been engaged seven year, and ain't hardly started with her linen. Only the sheets is done."

She smiled bravely.

Suddenly she put down her work, with a sigh; she was still very pale.

"I s'pose I'll miss him on Sundays," she said.

LOUIS HOW.



The Duke of Japonski

SITKA, 1877. February. Not an American sword in Alaska since June. Fire and pillaging everywhere. The Swine at Washington have abandoned us to God and the savages.

For weeks of nights the painted Tlingits slunk and razed our stockade, piece by piece. They looted the Kehoor. The golden icon, above the couch of the lovely Princess Maksoutoff of Russian days, is melted to an ingot. The deserted barracks are a wreck. Every dwelling was sacked except the log-house. We glance at the cross of Saint Michael's. They will burn the cathedral. Then they will burn us.

We are half a hundred, Americans, Russians, Canadians—barricaded in the log-house. To-morrow we die; but there is little to eat and naught to drink. Vainly we appealed in the last months to the Swine. Swine cannot interpret human expression. To-morrow we die.

We sit by dim whale-oil light, our rifles at our feet. All night we hear the howling of the Sheetkas, like the yelping of mad dogs; and the howling of the Siwash curs, like the yelping of Sheetkas. Kokwantons and Kaksattis are dancing around a bon-fire made of our treasures—three hundred fowl.

Some pray, some smile—some curse the Swine. Michael Travers laughs the loudest. He saw his cabin on Japonski Island tumbling earthwards, his crops trampled underfoot—"all in the nose of my patron Saint!" He recalls Mobile and Farragut laughing and sneezing in powder smoke. One man unspreads an English flag: If Sitka were British—then! Travers cheers for Old Glory.

Yet he knows our last desperate entreaty reached Washington days ago. Will the Swine heed? No.

The dawn glows behind Edgecombe. Verstovoi, too, hooded with virgin snow, glistens like a maiden's breast. The air is at freezing. No one has slept; we have eternity for that. The silence without is fearful. The Tlingits are rallying—thirsty for the blood that palpitates our hearts. Travers, poised at the gable window, silently curses the Swine, while he glares at him who spoke of England. No ship. Instead, a hundred war canoes, bristling with Tlingits. A witch with a labrette points gloatingly from the foremost prow. An arrow cuts Travers' sleeve. An Indian writhes with a bullet in his breast. Travers waits. Even if we write our wills, they—

“A ship?” cries Travers. “Yes,” says one—“an Englishman—curse the Swine! The Queen, then! Raise the British flag! Security and British annexation!” “Yes, yes!” shout all but one—“up, up!” They have started to fling it to the breeze. “*Pause,*” murmurs Travers, leveling his rifle—“*because each man that hauls must die. Which: treason, or the Stars and Stripes? Hands off, damn ye!*”

It is her Majesty's ship Osprey, Captain A'Court. Before she anchors a hundred swords are away from her in boats. The Tlingits vanish like fog. Travers salutes: “We are proud to be cousins to the British, sir.”

Some weeks later the Swine awoke with a snort.

For Michael Travers, called the Duke of Japonski, what did they provide? Why, in 1890—when he had made a garden of his little island, and sat with his pipe at the cabin door, content with a passing in the peace of his fruits—the Swine proclaimed the island Government Property. Travers had to go. He did—mad. If he still lives you may see him at St. Elizabeth's Asylum, near where the Swine wallow.

ANDREW MILLARD.



Pansies, or Panstes

PANSIES from him, pansies from the other man. Great luxuriant things, purple as midnight, golden as the noon, white as the moonlight, with their long fragile stems and great smooth faces, placid as the goddess of fate. These were from him. From the other man were little crinkled things, with short stout stems, flecked, capricious in their coloring, with love in their anxious wrinkled little faces. Those—from the warm moist air of a conservatory; these—from the autumn-touched air of a little garden. Those—plucked by the hand of a servant from under a canopy of glass; these—plucked by the hand of a lover from beneath the foliage of an old-fashioned Damask rose-bush.

On the one side, love, wealth, fashion, influence; on the other side, love—and nothing else. Was there nothing else? She pondered for awhile.

On that side was a noble name dimly connected with dishonor which was hinted at with bated breath; on this side, a good, substantial, but ordinary name, honor and honesty.

That or this? Which, O which?

The girl tossed the fragrant blossoms upon the table

before her, and looked into the mirror. What more beautiful face did the mirrors of the daughters of wealth reflect?

Both loved her. Did she love both?

The name she bore had never been tarnished. Her ancestors had been true nobles of the soil, honest, honorable, upright. No one could accuse one of them of a dishonorable action, or of—wealth. She laughed a little harshly. Were they always hand in hand, wealth and dishonor, poverty and honor?

The pansies watched her with knowing eyes. The smooth, placid-faced ones said, "Come." The anxious, wrinkled little ones said, "Come, O come, do come!" The placid ones said, "We shall make you great." The anxious ones with ragged petals cried, "We shall make you happy or die in the attempt."

"Pansies—for thoughts." Aye, anxious thoughts, worried thoughts, care. That's on one side.

Here are pansies, heart's ease, happy-hearted thoughts, pleasure. That's on the other side.

Pansies for anxious thoughts; pansies for ease of heart. Which?

Wealth, poverty; dishonor, honor; anxiety, happiness?

She took her pen, wrote "yes" on a sheet of paper, took up one of the pansies, hesitated, looked again into the pansy's eyes, and, gathering strength, kissed the written word, and sent it on its mission of joy.

EDGARDA WILLIAMS.



In Extremis

THE newspapers referred to it under the caption, "A Street Runaway." The physician said it would be fatal. The victim dictated a dispatch:

Jean, I am dying. Will you forgive, and come?

DAVID.

The lightning express swung on at its fifty miles an hour. The cars rattled and rocked. The landscape flew by like the pictures of a dream. But the motion was as the pace of a snail beside the eager beating of her heart. "Forgive! Forgive, and come!" was the only voice she heard in the roar, and dash, and confusion all about her.

He touched earth once more in the endless flight of delirium, and felt a hand on his forehead. He seemed standing with her again under the apple trees by the Maumee.

"David, I am here." The white apple blossoms vanished, and the white ceiling of the hospital was again above him. She saw the recognition in his eyes, and, with an arm gently held about his neck, she laid her face against his haggard cheek and whispered: "Not a word, David, my boy—my poor, poor boy. I was yours, and always yours. I only learned the full lesson when you were gone. Oh! if God were good, He would let me go into the grave with you!"

And he could only whisper, "I knew it would come! No anger and no trouble can keep asunder the hearts that God hath touched as one. I shall die, now, in the sacredness of that belief."

She gathered all her soul into one plea, and poured it forth: "Come back to me, David! Come back!"

He was sinking into the deep, deep shadows. But the desolation of her cry thrust itself into every fibre of his

being, and he took a supreme hold on life, and death was baffled and beaten back from his prey.

The apple blossoms were indeed above them this time, and the broad Maumee rolled at their feet. She was in white, and orange blossoms circled her hair. There was a crutch beside him that would be his companion to the grave, but there was no bitterness in his heart toward it. He simply laid his hand upon it and said: "It was fate that gave me this. Because I lean upon it, I have gained you also to lean upon in our walk through time, and as we go together up the long avenues of eternal life."

She answered: "Your cry, forgive and come!' pierced like a spear-thrust through my pride and stubbornness. It saved me from a sacrifice and a sacrilege—from a loveless marriage of pride and wealth together. It showed me the path back to love and happiness and you—and God *has been* very good!"

Then the bells chimed in the tower of the church, the children sang, and sweet showers of white sprinkled down from the apple trees.

J. H. KENNEDY.





The Maiden of the Valley

THE maiden knew not whence she had come nor why she was there, any more than the lilies that clustered in the field could tell the secret of their growth, beauty and fragrance. Her lithe suppleness was like that of the tall grasses which stood so straight, and yet bent themselves before every touch of the wind. Her hair was tawny with the warm beams of the sun, and her eyes shone like the stars that came out at night to look at her. She ran swift races with the boastful stream, exhaling the fresh perfume of violets as she moved, and when she lay down to sleep beneath the trees they lowered their branches protectingly over her, the soft grasses tried to embrace her, and the flowers nodded above her. The music of her voice echoed up and down the valley where she dwelt, and the feathered songsters would pause in their flight, turning their heads first on one side and then on the other, to listen to the notes that they could not rival.

The sun warmed her, the rain cooled her, and the breeze refreshed her. Every day was a carnival of gladness, and every night a journey into an enchanted and peaceful land.

But one morning the maiden awoke, not to the delights which had brightened and filled her life, but to something which she did not understand, something in the air about her which caused the hot blood to course quickly through her veins, and to stain the whiteness of her forehead with a color beside which the red gold of her hair grew dull.

In the distance among the greenwood she saw a being with face and figure somewhat like her own ; but he was strong like the oak tree, and she was like the willow. As she gazed, he raised his arms, there was a sudden, sharp report, and a bird fluttered lifeless to the ground. All through her body she was thrilled and stirred as never before, and sprang fleetly forward with an instinctive rage against the intruder, but, as she drew near, he turned and looked at her with eyes as beautiful as her own. Then he dropped the instrument with which he had slain the bird, and held out his arms to her. For an instant she hesitated, swaying lightly as the tall flowers at the first onset of the breeze, then felt herself sink into the outstretched arms with the mingled joy of heaven and earth.

When she awoke it was in a strange world. The trees were dropping their dry leaves, the flowers were faded, the wind moaned and the once cheerful brook was at work in mills and shops. She heard no sound of birds save once, when a whip-poor-will came betwixt the sun and earth with its sad complaint. The maiden was alone, and in the unrelenting embrace of a great throbbing pain. She started to find her valley with slow, weary steps, carrying the burden of her pain, but faint, sick and travel stained, she fell at last by the way, and, as she fell, a palpitating, blood-stained mass of feathers fluttered down beside her in the throes of its death agony. The huntsman's work was done, and bird and maiden lay very still upon the grass beneath the blue sky.

MARYE THORNBURG.





Orville and His Guitar

IN the gathering twilight Orville sits meditatively thrumming his guitar, but neither the instrument nor the music has any place in his reflections. He is thinking of Jeanette—the beautiful, false-hearted Jeanette—and the erratic strains are but the language of his reverie.

His fingers wander unconsciously among the strings and frets, and the magic guitar, in accents softly passionate and expressive, tells that his thoughts are now of that blissful evening when they two walked together by the old mill-stream. He can hear, again, the murmuring brook, and see the phosphorescent glow which the moonlight imparts to the rippling water. The music grows rapturously sweet as he recalls the halting love-tale that he whispered to her, while she listened with eyes downcast, and the toe of her dainty boot traced fantastic characters in the sand. He remembers her tremulous avowal of constancy, he remembers fondly the lover's seal which he imprinted upon the quivering lips, and the guitar speaks the enchantment of his retrospect.

Now the notes come forth in brilliant allegro, suggesting a glint of flying feet. It is the recollection of the dance that occupies the mind of the unhappy Orville. He sees the smartly gowned damsels and their graceful partners as they move in time to the sprightly music. He can almost feel the yielding form of the fair Jeanette in his arms as they float upon the sensuous strains of the waltz. Then, he remembers that officious young captain; a cloud crosses the horizon of his fancy, and the notes become short and angry. He recalls the

gracious smiles bestowed upon the officer by the fickle Jeanette, and he strikes viciously at the strings as he sees them dashing through the polka, and notes, with flaming jealousy, her sparkling eyes and the evident pleasure she takes in his remarks.

The angry staccato changes to a movement expressive of grave earnestness at the recollection of his unavailing remonstrance with Jeanette for her flippant conduct. The pique and sadness which her exasperating replies gave him reveal themselves in the music. He hears, again, her careless laugh and sees that, in spite of her affectation of indifference, she is on the verge of tears, as he proposes to release her from her pledge.

The twilight has passed into darkness, and the mournful, wailing melody tells how he repented his jealousy, and again sought Jeanette to say to her that all would be forgiven if she would only dismiss the captain from her mind; how he found that she had gone the day before, no one knew where, in company with the captain. There is a depth of feeling in the plaintive tones that bring tears to the eyes of the unhappy musician as they speak the anguish he felt upon learning of Jeanette's departure. The despair he felt as he returned to his mother's house is told in a finale of sadly expressive chords which fade into melancholy silence.

A heart-broken sob in the darkness starts the musician to his feet. The guitar falls unheeded to the floor, and he turns around, peering into the uncertain gloom.

"Ah, Jeanette, is it you come back again?"

Another sob is the only answer.

"And the army officer, Jeanette,"——

"O, Orville, I thought you knew. The captain is my cousin, and I went with him to see his mother who is ill."

MERRITT POST.

The Eternal Struggle

ONE day he awoke suddenly from the vague dream of childhood and became conscious that he was a man. He was standing on a wide plain. Before him was a tower, and on the rampart stood an aged, white-haired knight keeping guard.

"It is not just," thought the Youth, "that yonder old man should have a strong place and thus dominate the world. Let him come out onto the plain, and not entrench himself so proudly. His tower must be leveled to the ground."

"Yield, Old Man," he cried, "I am young and strong, and I will knock down your battlements."

But the Old Man shook his head as though he did not understand, and answered in a language that was strange to the Youth. And so they shouted, vainly, defiance, explanations, even entreaties in words incomprehensible to each other. The Youth felt strong enough to shake the walls and pull down the gates, and he attacked boldly. The Old Man came out and engaged with him. The Youth grappled his hoary opponent scornfully, but his hands slipped on the smooth armor, his heavy blows rang on the shield. The Old Man knew how to use both sword and spear skillfully. Day and night they waged their cruel strife; both warriors gave and received deep injuries and smarting wounds that would not heal, but still they fought relentlessly. The Youth stood always facing the East, he drew his strength from the dawn, but the eyes of the Old Man sought constantly the fields of the setting sun, and so the two looked upon different worlds, although they stood so close together. When hard pressed, the Old Man would often retire within his walls, and then the Youth, in a rage of disappointment, would madly assail the fortifications.

One day the Youth paused to think. "After all," he said to himself, "that is a fine old tower. No wonder the Old Man likes to live in it. He is not such a bad fellow really, though he would like to be lord. I begin to understand him"—the last words seemed to have a magic power, for as they left his lips there was a great clangor, and lo! the iron gates of the tower sprang open before him. He gazed a moment in astonishment, and then walked unmolested into the castle he had fought so long to conquer. Its warden had disappeared, but his armor was in the hall. The new owner of the tower put on the steel corselet; it fitted perfectly; he girt about the sword; all the pieces seemed to have been made for him.

"It seems to me 'twould be a pity to destroy this noble building," he mused. "I never knew until now what a commanding position it has, nor how thick are the walls. It is a protection to the plain."

There was a polished placque of brass in the hall; he picked it up to see how he looked in his new armor. What change was this! He beheld reflected an old man, wrinkled and white-haired, with trembling mouth. His blood ran cold in his veins, his heart beat slowly. . .

. . . He heard a call from without, and hastened to the rampart. A young man stood before the gates gesticulating boldly and calling to him in a loud voice. He could not understand the words; they were familiar yet strange. He had already forgotten the language of Youth. And so the eternal struggle between Youth and Old Age recommenced.

Old Age behind the high walls of authority and custom ever defends himself with the same weapons. Youth fights with hopeful courage until the moment when he begins to understand his opponent; that moment his arm slackens, he pauses, he is old.

EMILY B. STONE.

A Dream of Yesterday

A COOL breath, as of the country, drifts through the open window and rustles the papers scattered on my desk. There is a perfume of locust bloom and a scent of honeysuckle in the delicious draught so ineffably sweet to the nostrils clogged with city dust and smoke. It brings with it a fragrant memory of pasture-lands and meadow-streams. There is something so kindly soporific about it that soon I am dreaming of the days that are dead, those rare, lost Junes of buoyant boyhood, when life was pitched to notched notes of mirthful melodies that fell tumultuously on the ear like clouds of snowy apple blossoms drifting in the wind. Happy years, long before I had become one of the motley remnants in the rag-bag of the world.

Once more I sit on a jutting, worm-drilled beam of the little bridge that spans the creek—an awkward country boy, barefooted, tanned and freckled, a tattered straw hat shielding my head from the scorching rays of the sun. A hickory switch serves the purpose of a fishing rod, some coarse linen string makes a serviceable line. A yellow dog sits by my side beating a rataplan on the dusty planks with his bushy tail. Myriad midges glide across the surface of the stream. The cat-tails sway softly in the breeze and murmur a marshy melody. Wandering swallows soar and dip, their shadows glassing the water.

Down to this same bridge when twilight swoons upon the rushes, and the kildees cry, I ride old blind Dobbin. I sit on his sharp back and brush the mosquitoes away while he plunges his silken nostrils deep in the delicious pool. . . What nights! . . The ghostly night-hawk flits above my head. . . The glow-worm lights his lamp in the hay-marsh beyond. . . The bats criss-

cross in the deepening gloom, and from the reeds and lily-pads floats the hoarse serenade of the bull-frogs. .
. Ah-rr-oomp! . . Ah-rr-oomp! . . Ba-aa-roomp! . .

. . After watering blind Dobbin, I trudge down the dew-damp lane after the cows, whistling a tune as gaily as a thrush. A few stars twinkle in the sky, and the crescent of an icy moon glides ghost-wise among the purple curtains of night. . . "Co-boss. . . Co-boss. . . Co-boss." . . From afar comes the answering tinkle of cow bells, drifting dreamily over the summer-haunted pasture-lands. . . "Co-boss. . . Co-boss. . . Co-boss." . . "Tinkle. . . tinkle. . . tink. . . le." . . I reach the rickety stile at the end of the lane, and there a young girl in white is waiting. A sun-bonnet dangles from her hand. A tangle of hazel curls swirl about her ears and ripple down her back. Occasionally a saucy puff of wind whips the curls into flossy ravellings. . . We linger by the stile until the vesper purple has deepened into somber black. The berry-stained hand rests timidly in mine. The dark lashes fringe the down-cast eyes and kiss her cheeks. . . In stammering words I whisper in her ear the old, old tale, and can almost feel the warm blushes of her face. Her answering words linger lovingly on the soft atmosphere, no sound save the garrulous chattering of a cricket to drown their melody. . . A touch of lips, a sweet "good-night," and she glides through the stile and vanishes in the gloom beyond. . . I am alone. . . The night wind sweeps past moaning. . . Alone. . .

* * * * *

It is here that my dream always ends, and I grow into myself.

JOHN NORTHERN HILLIARD.



The Living Death

WEARILY they wandered on under the warm May sunshine of that Southern sky.

Man and wife they were, outcasts of fortune, going down together, he wilfully, she devotedly, bound in the fetters of that unbreakable bond.

He was wasted and pallid; his eyes had no lustre, his step no firmness.

Her face reflected the whiteness of his, just as once in happier days her mind had reflected his aspirations and her heart his love.

They had reached an inviting homelike place on the outskirts of the village. They must rest. The door was hospitably opened.

Within the air was cooler. There were easy chairs, comfort and tokens of refinement.

But the woman's eyes never ceased their anxious watch over her husband.

He tried to speak, but the sentence was left half finished. He tried to read, but the hand which held the paper dropped slowly down. There was no power in it; no will behind it.

Now he recovered himself. He must appear well before his host. But his eyes closed, and again his hand slipped slowly down.

Once more he recovered himself, but in vain; both hand and paper were at rest on the chair.

He had given himself up to the alluring dreams of his drugged brain.

"He is ill?" inquired the host.

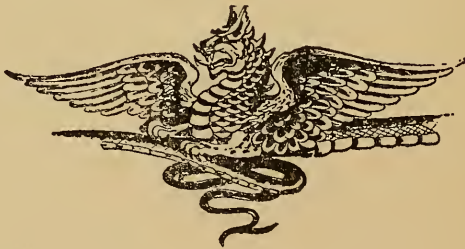
"No, it is no illness. It is death, death at the top first; death of head and heart. No active thought, no generous impulse can now be his. He has killed them all."

And she, his wife? The drunkard's wife is happy compared with her. The drunkard is sometimes himself. There are moments when he remembers that once he loved. There are hours when his children may creep into his lap and his arms close around them in a strong embrace.

But O, that cursed drug! Not one lucid moment does it grant its victim.

Slowly she roused him. Out of the home and on into the shadow of the ever-darkening future they moved; he, the opium eater, and she, his bondwoman, chained to the body of a living death.

E. MESERVE JAMES.





A Human Spark

HENRIQUE met her in the crowded street. Their sleeves touched. Her eyes met his.

To this day he cannot remember the color of her hair. He has forgotten her face and form. Her name he never knew.

Their eyes spoke each to the other, as the sunlight whispers to the dewdrop.

In an instant she was gone, and he was going.

Henrique was trembling. He walked unsteadily, bewildered. Through their marvellous little windows these two human souls had recognized each other. The quiver of the eye was like unto the clasp of a hand.

Does soul thus speak to soul, in mute recognition of friendship long forgotten?

Can the human spark shed light through centuries of darkness, outlive the crumbling earth, the roaring sea; grope through misty space, shine forth in new worlds as in old, and conquer even death?

Should you meet him in the crowded street to-morrow, ask of Henrique.

WILL M. CLEMENS.



Found in an Old Bible

WHO was she? Where did she live and when?
Who knows her history?

Did the love-light from her eyes make hearts beat
wildly as she passed by?

Did men plead fearfully and hopefully for favors at
her hand and wait for words to pass her lips that would
mean life or death to them? Who knows?

Did her feet perchance join in the stately minuet
where, in her satin petticoat and panniered gown, she
touched the hands of those whose whitened wigs would
bend, that eyes might catch the radiance of her smile?

Did little children gather round her knee and call her
by the holy name of mother? Who knows?

Did time deal gently with her till a second generation
rose to call her blessed, as the light for her grew dim,
and the whitened hair and saddened face told those who
loved her that her work on earth was nearly done?

Or did she die young? Who knows?

Had she perchance a heart secret, that went with her
through a long and saddened life and to the grave? Who
knows?

Who was she? Where did she live and when?

Was she a heroine?

Did she perchance perform some great deed of which
the world may well be proud?

Is the world better for her having lived in it?

Who knows?

ANNIE WESTON WHITNEY.



The Passion Flower

WHAT strange fate led her to my studio door on the day of all days, when I was ill and troubled?

I had destroyed my canvas—I had thrown my brushes on the floor. My thought was so beautiful, my work so unworthy.

The rain beat down on the glass roof; the pattering drops mocked my despair. Even the thought of an absent one, dear to my heart, had no power to console me. I needed the presence of a sympathetic soul. I needed the actual grasp of a friendly hand—the sound of a real voice to help me.

There was a knock at my door and a woman, I had not seen in years, entered timidly. She was clad in sombre black, a purple passion flower at her breast.

We had been friends in the old time; friends—no more—no less than that. But in the great city our lives drifted apart and we had almost forgotten each other. What strange fate led her to my studio door on the day of all days when I was ill and troubled?

She said she had awakened that morning in a strange bitter-sweet mood, had thought of me—and had come.

When she had spoken, she sat by my side and looked sadly at the torn canvas and the discarded brushes.

Then I began my work anew—still it was not good. She read the sorrow in my eyes and, bending over me, kissed my trembling lips.

The rain on the glass roof sounded like the tinkling laughter of fairies. My brush flew over the canvas, the colors blended divinely, and, at last, when all was finished, I could have wept for joy. The dream, the beautiful dream was realized, and a woman's kiss had wrought the miracle.

Afterwards, on every sunny day, we left the cruel city

and wandered through the fields, like happy children. But on rainy days I worked in the studio, and she sat beside me, turning the gray gloom to sunlight by the inspiration of her kisses.

It was at twilight, her hand was in mine, her head was on my breast and I was looking at the passion flower, whose purple splendor illumined her sombre gown, when I bethought me of the absent one, dear to my heart.

“You are cold, you shivered?” said the woman at my side.

Then I told her of the other.

She left me alone in the twilight, but the memory of her white, tear-stained face will haunt me forever.

After she had gone, something shone palely before me. It was a passion flower, such as she always wore, and to me she seemed allied in some strange, vague way to her favorite blossom. I placed the flower on my crucifix, kissing it passionately, for I felt that the fragrance of her soul clung to the delicate petals.

She came once again to the studio to greet my bride and wish her joy. My bride is like a June rose and I love her dearly.

The passion flower is faded ; my bride laughed as she showed it to the woman who had inspired me by her kisses.

“See!” said the one dear to my heart ; “There’s a flower like the one you’re wearing, only this is faded.”

The other took the dead blossom and threw it away, saying : “There should be nothing sad in this new life of yours, and a dead flower is not fit to dwell with a happy bride.”

Then she left us and went out of my life forever.

My bride is like a June rose and I love her dearly—but the other—the other !

What strange fate led her to my studio door, and on the day of all days, when I was ill and troubled ?

HELEN LEAVENWORTH HERRICK.



Death and Dolls

THE room was still as Sunday. The dampness of Autumn storms brooded in the cold heavy air, and dragged a clammy finger across the child's warm face as she peered through the mysterious door. The curtains that she pushed aside in straight formal folds, and through the gloom grotesque figures of the carpet blinked pompously. Released from their linen palls, the chairs sat about the walls in the mournful silence of red velvet finery, and from the yawning fire-place snowy asters looked out with pallid indifference at the dead old lady.

The child cautiously approached the bier and looked at the drawn grey face on the pillow; her own was just level with it. She was pleasantly curious and excited. When the cat caught her white rat the day before, she had cried herself hoarse and kissed passionately the small red wound in the white fur. That was different; Jackie was playing so quietly, when all of a sudden Malty put her teeth right through the tiny red heart. And Jackie squealed. The tears began to tremble in her eyes as she remembered it.

Grandma just breathed shorter and shorter, as she lay with her knees drawn up and her hair straying a little from her cap across the pillow. Grandmother was wearing a black silk gown now, and her hair was smooth. Then, she must be so very, very old. People must want to die when they get as old as that.

But Grandmother gave her a doll last Christmas—who would give her dolls now? Another tear joined the one shed for the white rat. There was a step in the room. Grandfather came in. As he lifted her in his arms he saw that the little face was tearful. “Poor child,” he quavered, “it was cruel to let you come in here alone.” His old voice broke with grief.

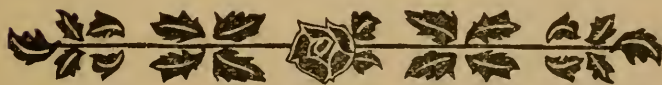
She looked at him bewildered. Why should he care so much about it? He would die too, soon; he was so awfully old.

Grandmother wasn't pretty. She looked at the bony hands crossed over the dead heart, and then at her own—small, plump, and soiled.

Suddenly the thought came, “My hands will grow to be like hers,—I'll have to grow old and die too,” and she began to cry—loud and frightened wails, inconsolable, helpless, until the old man forgot his own tears in amazement that so small a child could feel so deeply the loss of her with whom his own joy had died.

A black-robed aunt took the child back to the nursery where she grew happy again, rigging up a box for a bier and laying upon it her wax doll who would shut her eyes—she meanwhile weeping by its side.

GEORGIA HARRIET PANGBORN.





The Suicide

LIGHTS, laughter, music. The night before the wedding. The great rooms stripped of their lavish trappings to make way for the guests of to-morrow.

Florists everywhere, the air stifling from their burdens of perfume.

Merry voices behind the silken portieres.

In the huge, state drawing-room deft fingers erect an altar for the coming sacrifice.

Pere and *mere* drift complacently about, satisfied pride on every feature.

Is not this marriage the consummation of their cherished hopes?

What matters it if he is twice her age, and a *roue*? His name is an heirloom of centuries.

They knew she would forget that other one. They had been wise to object. *She*? Forgotten in the revelry she hears it all.

Kneeling there alone in the dark she is not the radiant creature the preparations would seem to warrant.

Letters—hundreds of them around her; the blue ribbons that had held them together flung here and there.

She tries to read one by the firelight; but scalding tears blind her. Photographs strewn about; faded flowers; a glove. All that was left her out of that mad confusion.

How can she go through to-morrow's mockery?

If she could only see *him* first.

She will write him, telling him of her marriage. She will wire him. Anything—anything—to prevent the horrible to-morrow.

But her pride; her miserable pride, that has torn her heart into shreds.

Wildly she hugs the letters, dead flowers, pictures.

Burn them? Never.

A shudder! His voice!

It is time for the dress rehearsal. A heart-breaking groan, and she gathers her treasures together; smothers them with caresses. The beloved face; will she ever see it again? She cannot let him go. Sob after sob—dry, choking sobs.

For a brief space the slender figure lies prostrate, face downward, while the delicate finger-nails leave their sharp impress in the soft flesh. The burial service of her fondest dreams.

A tap upon the door. No answer. They think she is sleeping, worn out from the tiresome day.

Another. They have come for their victim.

In half an hour and she will join them; she has something to do.

The letters are sorted and tied in the old form, to go with her; the photographs, and the crumbling flowers.

She writes a letter—a woman's passionate outcry of pain,—seals it with a kiss a man might die for. Now for the farewell to herself, to her womanhood, to all her once fair ideals.

Like one in a trance she studies her face in the mirror.

“Good bye! good bye!”

Her head sinks slowly into her cold hands.

She stands there a trembling, helpless figure. The dreary, desolate years to come confront her mercilessly.

Her punishment, she knows, is sure.

There is a final quiver of the sweet lips; her hand on the knob, a wistful look backward.

Then—a rush forward—and she runs lightly down the stairs to her doom.

FRANCES A. HOADLEY.



A Wife

IT was the tenth anniversary of her wedding-day, and how happy she had been! Alone in a dim corner of her conservatory, she paused a little, with a full heart, to think it over.

She had stolen away from her guests for a moment. Henry was with them and was telling them one of his stories, so just at present they would not miss her. The children were safe in bed at last, sated with sweets and goodies; she wanted a little moment to herself now to draw a long breath.

They were like a dream as she looked back upon them, those long years of her married life. There had not been a breath of pain to mar them. She had just lived along, petted and pampered, loved and flattered.

How, if it had all been otherwise!

How, if Henry had not spoken of love to her that evening more than ten years ago; how, if he and she had never gone together out upon the Newport cliffs; if he had never courted, never won her!

The blood rushed in a great surge to her face, and her heart stood still a minute. She put out her slender hand with the gold wedding-band upon it, and looked at it strangely. Then suddenly she pulled the ring off.

How would it feel to be free like that!

How would it feel to be out to-night under the cold, bright stars; to leap to the saddle as she had done in her

girlhood out upon the western plains; to ride and ride through the dark, sweet night with the wind in her face and hair!

How would it feel to know that she might come and go as she listed; that there was no one to claim her love or her duty, none to demand her allegiance!

Or if it had been still otherwise!

How, if a voice she used to know were in her ears to-night; were speaking in that low, vibrating tone that had sounded to her in a dim conservatory, now so long ago! How, if a hand that had once met her's were clasping it even now, pressing it close and closer, till the rings cut into the fingers! How, if a force that had run for a space side by side with her will were with her now, and holding her in dominion! How, if that great wave of chance had not caused two lives to drift apart, and if to-night—

Across the lighted parlor, over the spreading ferns, comes the sound of talk and laughter. They fall strangely upon her ear as she stands alone, apart from them.

But someone behind her is saying: "Dearest, what moved you to run away from us?"

And she answers, looking down upon her slim left hand that bears the wedding-ring: "I was just stealing a little breathing-space, darling, to think about our happiness."

ELIZABETH C. CARDOZO.





The Worm Turneth

“AND—I ’ave to die?” Anette asked with the pretty French accent that had charmed all ears during the long trial. Not a sound in the crowded Court. The Judge gravely bowed.

“And it is permitted me to speak, oh, but, all that I will? Ah — merci. Then I shall speak and from my heart, is it not so? Écoute. I am a girl, a woman of 19 years. I am not pretty nor graceful made, and so poor—only work girl, but that which I have to give, I did give—myself. Monseur le Judge, and you messieurs labas, figure to yourselves that when it is a question of the best that a woman can give to a man, the best of all womens is the same—it is her only self—and that I gave to Louis who I poignarded. Ah! —” her manner intensified, her voice deepened—“if you all of the Court here could have seen, have been there you ‘must’ have said—‘elle a raison; elle a bien fait—she was right.’ Tenez; c’était comme ceci, it was like this: I had been out to buy somethings. The butcher man, as I passed, mocked himself of me. He said: ‘Behold the last of the handsome Louis. She shall not endure more long time now.’ Ah—what shame! I weep for shame. I enter to my house. I tell Louis. He smile and go on, with the pretty poignard he ’ave, to pick the butt of his cigar from his porte-cigare. I pray, I beg my Louis to marry me and save me from such insult; to let me care for him always

now, de se ranger enfin. He look down upon me. His red lips curl up under his belle moustache. His eyes 'arf close. Ah, God! what an air of disgust, 'Marry you,' he say, 'ugly little magot? what do you take me for? there are only imbeciles who marry. Va t'en, go—get out!'—and he push me with his foot. It was not what he say; it was the contempt inconceivable of the tone. It was a stab to me deep down to my heart, through my heart. My blood commence to dance; hisses sound in my ears. I make one terrible cry and I return that stab of Louis right to his heart—but with his own dagger!" The girl paused, her hand was uplifted and clenched as if with the imaginary dagger, her eyes were blazing, the fierce grandeur of her attitude gave the poor figure a moments' grace. Slowly her arm dropped, her flash passion flickered and died out. Gradually she became the miserable chetiffe little Anette of the trial. A poor, thin voice added: "Je l'ai tué. I kill him, and you, Monsieur le Judge, must have me kill. Allez, allez, faites. My Louis have stab, have kill my heart"—she sighed pitifully—"one is already 'alf dead who is at the 'eart dead. C'est tout. It is all."

In profound silence the matron passed her arm around little Anette and led her away.

HARRY SAINT-MAUR.





A Priest

A CHOCOLATE colored river drifting lazily between low hills, under a soft blue sky. A yellow road stretching its dusty length along the rounded hill-tops, following the river until it was lost in the quivering waves of heat in the southern horizon. A hot stillness enveloping a world in which there was no sign of human life, save where a cluster of low-browed red buildings slumbered in the afternoon sun beside the river, and from the encircling wall of which a man's figure came, a black patch upon the yellow road.

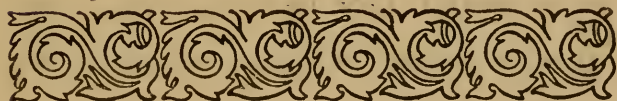
His coarse robe licked the ground and was stained by the dust. In his hand he held an open book upon which his eyes were intent, his lips moving slowly as he walked. A tall, spare man with the long, firm, swinging step of an athlete, but with the waxen pallor of an ascetic under the shadow of his wide-brimmed hat. He paused in the shade of a spreading cottonwood tree, whose white down hung in silvery listlessness in the breathless air. He lifted his eyes and looked dreamily across the wide river toward the forest clad hills beyond, where the spirit of the midsummer day brooded dumbly over the heavy green of the motionless trees. He removed his hat and brushed the moist black hair back from his brow, lingering a moment under the grateful shade of the cottonwood; and as he loitered there the sensuous hotness of the day crept into his chilled veins, and the earth odors of throbbing midsummer surged

over him and benumbed his brain, and put his vigilant soul asleeping, and from out the quivering, shining air there came to him the vision of a woman—a woman with low, level brows and shadowy eyes and hair, and a mouth like a ripe pomegranite. Her dewy lips were parted, and in the red cleft her white teeth gleamed. She held her little plump brown hands toward him, and through the eloquent silence of the July day there chimed a voice, low and soft and caressing, and it said : “ I am the world—come ! ”

A dull flush glowed in his pale cheeks, his smouldering eyes leapt into flame, and his book fell from his unheeding hands, clattering to his feet and lying with its crumpled pages half buried in the dust. But as he stood there, his senses swimming in the baleful beauty of her eyes, there floated down upon him the soft note of a bell tolling gently.

It was the Angelus. “ Ave, Maria, gratia plena . . . ora pro nobis peccatoribus . . . ” he murmured, as with closed eyes he plucked his book of hours from out the dust and resumed his march along the yellow road.

ANTHONY LELAND.





Jeremy's Consolation

BATHOS and pathos go hand in hand. A glance of the eye, an inflection of the voice—and one is at a loss whether to smile or to sigh.

I thus mused as I watched old Jeremy in his invalid's chair, lumbering along the corridors of the hospital. He was very old—seventy, I suppose—hopelessly paralytic, a life-member of the hospital. One would have supposed him given over to misery; but, on the contrary, he was the most cheerful of all of the incurables. A delightful old fellow, taking life splendidly, he was sustained by a single consolation—a pot of eels!

Each month, about the thirteenth, he received them from a cousin at Hamburg. For years they had never failed him. The old man would count off the days on his calendar until the eventful thirteenth. What anticipation! In ten days—in five days, they will be here! And then what delightful realization! What rejoicings, with the box actually set down before him, and all his invalid cronies around!

“How long will they last, do you think, Jeremy?”

“We must make them do two weeks, at least; and then, in sixteen days, we will have the next box. Draw up your chairs, old friends! Only one apiece, to-day; remember that!”

Dear old paralytic? How often have I wished well to that Hamburg cousin! How often have I turned from that innocent orgy divided between laughter and tears, wondering at the complexity of human emotions with bathos and pathos almost one.

CHARLES F. HOWELL.



Venus of Milo

THE room is hung with rich draperies and rare pictures. The heavy, antique furniture is curious and costly. A glowing fire sheds radiance on the polished brass and oak, and brings out the crimson coloring of the curtains. A marble statuette of Venus of Milo stands white and chaste amid the luxury, gazing away into the unknown with the same unfathomable look that her eyes have had in them for two thousand years.

A little child ventures into the room, and stands for a moment in the firelight gazing about her—pleased, perhaps, with the flickering shadows and the winking bits of brass on the furniture. Then her eye falls on the white statue of the Goddess of Love.

The child knows nothing of love save that which is satisfied in her mother's arms. She knows only that the white woman is beautiful, and but one way of paying tribute.

She ventures nearer and nearer, until at last she puts her chubby arms about the figure, and presses her warm lips to those of the statue. Then she starts back a little, for the lips of Love are cold.

But Venus of Milo only gazes away into the unknown with the same unfathomable look that her eyes have had in them for two thousand years.

ALBERT BIGELOW PAINE.





A Mockery

HENRIQUE found a withered rose upon the floor. He moved about his bachelor apartments with wavering steps, his hands trembling, his face wine-flushed.

The withered rose upon the floor was as a magnet to his blood-shot eyes. He scowled, he stared, and laughing as the idiot laughs, he took the faded flower, and with the tenderness of a woman's touch, placed it upon the marble shelf above the fire.

He sank into the velvet depths of his favorite chair before the glowing coals, and lighting his pipe, followed, with half-closed eyes, the curling smoke.

As forbidden thoughts come quickly and with force, there dawned upon his muddled brain the little drama of the withered rose. In a flash it all came back to him—how *she*—his Pearl, he called her—the week before, had given him the flower, and in neglect, he failed to nourish it, the petals drooped, and now it lay quite dead, even as *she*—whom he called Pearl—lay dead at the undertaker's, not far away. The midnight pace, the glitter and the gloss, fade Pearls as well as roses, and Henrique, like other men, had drugged his conscience to the truth. Not so much as pity lingered.

A neighboring bell tolled three. It startled him, and staggering to his feet, he took the withered flower from the marble shelf, crushed it in his fingers, and with a smile Satanic cast the hated thing upon the burning coals. Immediately he uttered a terrible oath, and his face grew purple.

A green worm from out the heart of the dead flower clung to his forefinger.

WILL M. CLEMENS.



The Japanese Collector

IN the reign of Iye Yasu, the founder of the Tokugawa, or last Minamoto dynasty, there lived in Kiyoto a simple-minded youth, who had more money than brains. He was the son of a poor sandal maker, but by unhappy fortune he succeeded to an immense estate from his uncle.

The young man was seized with the notion to have his house and tea-room decorated with costly ornaments and art treasures, such as the wealthy and cultivated people possess. He began collecting "antiques," but he did not know the good from the bad, the true from the false.

In a short time the young man had squandered his vast fortune in buying mere imitations of the mat of Confucius; the sword of the great general, Taiko Sama; a glazed cup made by the celebrated Tanaka Cho-jiro, now of priceless value, and "Kake-mono," painted by inferior artists.

After being reduced to beggary, the foolish young man carried these "antiques" about with him, and said to people on the streets, "O that I had collected coins struck by Iye Yasu! I would have had a fortune."

LEE J. VANCE.





Repentance

IN the heart of the silent night and in the glare of the lurid day my Sin was beside me. As I moved among my fellows they saw the shadow of his black wings upon me, and they held themselves aloof.

“Accursed!” they cried. “Unclean!”

Therefore I went my way silently, with my Sin for my only companion.

But in the heart of the black night I faced him and let my glance meet his. And we understood one another.

Then it befell, after many days and by reason of much weeping, that there came a change. For behold this black Sin that towered above me grew paler and paler of aspect; and at length there shone out a white light from within that transformed him.

Nevertheless, as I walk among my fellows, they cry: “Accursed! Unclean!”

For with a strange blindness they still behold him as he once was, and they perceive not that, through long vigils and by reason of much pain, he has acquired a strange glory.

But I only smile and look upon my transfigured companion, and we go our solitary way.

ELIZABETH C. CARDOZO.





The Society

After Mr. Henry James.

MISS SOFARING was tremendously vulgar, almost vulgar enough to be an American. Probably it was because of this undisputedly inherent trait of vulgarity that she made no reply to my question. I was surprised (as I realized when I came to consider the case afterwards—I had failed to appreciate it at the time); but on happening to look at her eyes, which were large and of a somewhat *banal* blue—(I mention these details because I am in the habit of dotting all my i's)—I found that in them an answer was clearly expressed. It was not so much that the eyes said anything, but there remains in my mind no doubt that they expressed what I may put into words, thus: “I do not know what you mean; I am utterly at a loss.”

This was on the Thursday, and it was not, so far as I positively know, till the Tuesday following, that the force of Miss Sofaring's opinion, at least in all its completeness, to me, occurred to my rather troubled mind. Then the impression was a somewhat fatuous but desultory depression, such as one has on entering a railway carriage and finding it to be pre-occupied by far from effete Americans.

LOUIS HOW.





Othman the Turk

OTHMAN, the Turk, sits on his couch sipping his coffee. Through the half-open door of the women's apartments comes the voice of his Circassian wife, singing softly to herself. With the low drone of the song Othman's thoughts fly away and roam in distant lands, in France, in Egypt, in Spain and in Kurdistan ; now he thinks philosophy, now of the Koran, of the Victoria regina, of Roumania. It is all a delightful confusion, vague thoughts not hard to think, till suddenly the song stops and he returns to himself, and to his foot which has gone to sleep under him.

He changes his pose and claps his hands ; not as we clap our hands, vigorously with a harsh noise ; he puts his large, soft palms together slowly, making a low, hollow sound, and Ibrahim the boy appears.

"Ibrahim," saith Othman, "tell the maid to continue to sing. Bring me paper and pens with ink. Begone, now ; I would think."

Maida hath resumed her song, and Othman hath begun to dip his pen in the ink. For Othman knows that thought is precious and must be saved, for he hath travelled to Paris, and his brother even to Chicago, where all men write whenever they think.

HERBERT WARE.





The Mound Builder

IN the field from which the potatoes had been dug, leaving it an unsightly stretch of uneven brown earth, littered here and there with dead stalks, a child was playing.

The hot September sun burnished his white head with a metallic lustre, and shining through his large ears made them luminously pink, but as to the rest of him, Nature had tanned his skin and faded his flimsy calico slip until he was hardly distinguishable from the sand.

He was very busy. His gnome-like head drooped low over a mound he was ornamenting with inverted tomato cans and broken bottles; his lips were drawn in like those of a toothless old man, and his forehead was puckered with fine lines.

"What's all this, Jim?" I asked, indicating the curious pyramid. He looked up with a wide grin, his light grey eyes scintillating with satisfaction: "A jail. There's an angleworm in every tomato can. This potato bug is the jailer, and I'm goin' to hang a caterpillar pretty soon."

GEORGIA HARRIET PANGBORN.





Heart Thoughts

(At Twenty-two)



OH, this pure, bright, beautiful, beautiful world!

So full of light, and love, and happiness, and grand and noble men and women. What joy to live! What a blissful future awaits me, with him, my hero and my king! Love shall be our law, and success, honor and renown shall be our portion.

"Hand in hand, and heart to heart," thus will we accomplish our heart's desire, and make of life whate'er we wish. My heart sings continually in its exquisite enjoyment and contentment. God, I thank thee for life and youth and love.

Sing on! my heart, sing on!

(At Thirty-two)

Oh, this dreary, miserable, deceitful world!

So full of poverty, and sorrow, and heartaches and regrets, and wretched, wasted, ruined lives. Life is a cruel strife, a continual disappointment. Idols crumble, hopes decay, and love dies. Friends betray us, and Death robs us. Courage and hope are fast leaving me. I fear the future. Passion and Ambition are dead within me, but Pride still lives. The world knows not my burdened heart, and armed with patience I endure.

God, I thank thee for pride, and the power to endure.

Bear on! my heart, bear on!

ELOISE GRAY.

The Nightmare

I AM strangely afflicted. My bones grow and my flesh swells. I am immense. I am tremendous. The size of me increases. To pass through yonder door I cannot, for I am larger than the door, and I would suffer pain were I to enter there.

You are my physician, you say? Ah, then you can give me of the mysterious medicine in your cabinet. You can reduce me. You can ensmall me, curtail me, shrink me as the sun withers the dead ferns. Then I can pass through yonder door without so much as touching my sleeve.

But you refuse me and say I must go within as I am, with the greatness of me. To force me thus you say is a remedy for my ill, a curative boldness, a severity of treatment. To squeeze me, to crush my flesh; you prescribe this as a remedy for what you call a mental and not a physical deformity?

Take these men away. They seize me, they crowd and crush me. They must not! Hands off, I implore you! Through the door, you say? What! this mass of flesh through such a crack? It cannot be. It is impossible. See; my flesh is being torn from my bones. My limbs are breaking. I am being crushed—suffocated, mangled to the death.

I am through the door, you say—safely within without a hurt? Ah, you mock me in my agony—I am suffering—I am broken—undone—a mangled mass. Look, my breath is stopping—I am dying. These men are my murderers—they have killed me.

WILL M. CLEMENS.

A Demon of the Depths

MY written words cannot describe the Demon. In Dante's dreams of hades there are no such phantasms. The eyes are luminous, and red and green by turns, and glassy. They send forth darts of fire like chains of lightning in the eastern skies. They charm and terrify. They shoot forth a virile power that fascinates and attracts like the loadstone. They rivet man's gaze, pierce him through; draw into themselves all that is good, and true, and noble in man's soul—the very life, even the clay, of man himself.

The Demon is amphibious. I have seen it on land. To see it once is to see it often.

I have seen it stalking through the streets as a funeral passed, its great orbs fastened gloatingly on the mourner's cab.

I have found the Demon in the cholera districts of Europe, whither I had journeyed in vain to rid myself of its fateful eyes.

Out in the broad Pacific, at the beautiful island of Molokai, I saw the monster. There it eat, and slept, and toiled with the damned ones.

In Death Valley I saw it, when the sands of the desert were burning the weary feet of the lost.

In the madhouse and prison I have seen the monster; in almshouse and in tenement.

I have seen it on the streets after nightfall, tramping side by side with the lost daughters of Phryne.

I have seen it force its way into hungry homes, into the sick chamber; it haunts the pesthouse.

It is a monster great in bulk, yet penetrating everything that is sombre and sad.

In the sunlight the Demon cannot live. Where hope abides the Demon may not come.

And the name of the Demon is Despair.

JAMES H. GRIFFES.

The Breath of Life

THE wholesome breath of springtime quickened life and stimulated hope in the sick man. Through the weary winter months, while withering icy blasts had prisoned him within doors and the sight of the white blanket of snow that wrapped the earth as in cerements had caused him to shudder, he had longed for these brighter, warmer days, he who loved the blue sky and the open air, who knew every blade of grass in the front yard, who talked with the birds, and to whom every gnarled bough of the apple trees in the orchard was dear.

His entreaties prevailed and, warmly wrapped, he lay upon a couch under the trees, basking in the sun. A gentle breeze now and then graciously fanned him and the sweet aroma of opening bud and blossom filled his nostrils.

So deep was his sense of restfulness and quiet happiness that he scarcely noticed the occasional electric twinge of pain that ran through him. But he was very feeble, and anon everything about him took on a subtle, far-away appearance, as though he were dreaming and slowly drifting away from the shores of reality.

A sharper twinge of pain recalled him and he lay back more wearily upon the pillow for a moment. "It is so good to breathe again. To-morrow I shall surely be better," he gently murmured to himself, smiling.

And then a drowsiness stole over him, as though a distillation of poppies had filled the air, and he slowly closed his eyes to slumber.

A little gust of wind came along and the old apple tree, friend of his childhood, youth and manhood, opened wide its arms, throwing over him a beautiful shroud of pink and white blossoms, and shaking from its leaves the dew that fell like teardrops upon the upturned face, pallid and still, forever.

LYMAN HORACE WEEKS.

At the Meadow Bars

THE little woman on the stage was singing a strangely familiar song, and it so startled him, the wife and daughter at his elbow were, for the moment, forgotten. The words of the song fascinated him.

“Down by grandpa’s meadow
You’d meet me at the bars,”

and the singer’s voice rose and fell, in cadence soft and sweet.

Was it possible that someone else had met somebody at the bars of *their* grandpa’s meadow?

Roguish, laughing brown eyes—tiny sunburnt hand—and lips, that even to think of kissing seemed sacrilege. And down the lane came the overgrown boy—making believe that he had not seen her red gingham frock from afar.

“John Reeves, you’re just too mean for anythin’—you never brought *me* any May-flowers. You’d better ask that city girl to go to Trout Ponds with you; ’coz I’m agoin’ with Chad Hunter.”

And how her curly ringlets danced as she tossed her head and turned away—yet expecting John would follow.

“Goin’ with Chad Hunter? Well, I don’t care.” And the two young hearts suffered in silence for many a long day thereafter.

And who could have forseen that they two should never meet again—that cruel Fate should send Nellie to a girl friend’s on a visit—and he to the great city.

His mother must surely have guessed his boyish love, and knew that he hoped to win her some day—or else she would never have called him her darling boy, when she wrote him ever so tenderly—that Nellie Graham, his boyish sweetheart, had been drowned.

Through the mists of years he sees her—down by grandpa’s meadow—standing at the bars. And —

The song ends.

PERCIE W. HART.

The Siege of Paris

1871

SUNDAY the one hundred and eightieth day of the invasion. All last night we heard the roar of cannon. "We are no longer invaded," writes the *Figaro*; "here we are besieged."

The north wind cuts like a sabre. The air one breathes seems filled with bayonet points. The sky is a faint silvery gray; then the sun comes up, like a bullet heated in a forge.

Crowds of people out. An inconceivable absence of excitement. Yet since the fourteenth of December Paris has had no news from the rest of France. Every one is disturbed within; but every one is silent for fear of frightening his neighbor.

The churches are full: mothers, wives, daughters, sisters, young people, old people, national guards, officers, soldiers—each one prays for his own, prays to Him who opened the tomb of Lazarus, for the doing of another miracle in the resuscitation of France.

Not the shadow of a street booth. They have all been sold for firewood. There is no more coal. Green wood is worth two francs per fifty-five pounds; wood which weeps like the Madeleine and burns as willingly as a heretic.

Nevertheless there are toys in the shops, bonbons at the confectioners, eaters in the cafes, promenaders in the streets.

After ten o'clock, not a cat stirs; it would be slain to make stewed rabbit. The clear sky is jeweled with stars. In the long streets, punctuated here and there by the feeble oil lights, we hear the tramp of the patrols and the sentinels, and at frequent intervals the heavy grumble of cannon, borne in on the icy wind of the night.

PAUL MAHALIN.

From Guillotine to Glory



IT was during the reign of the Jacobins. Down the broad boulevard rattled a tumbril loaded with victims on their way to the guillotine. One was a girl, with a glory of golden locks, eyes of electric blue and a face as fair as that of an angel translated from the fields of asphodel.

On reaching the murder machine, she left the death-cart with her condemned companions, while the rabblement rejoiced, and jested, and made most merriful sport.

“Ah!” cried a Jezabel, pointing at the girl, “ah, see! The proud princess is a coward, for all she is a Bourbon. She trembles—she turns pale! But she was to have been wedded to Prince d’Lanville to-day. Well, poor thing, she shall not be cheated of a bridegroom. Ha, ha! But his name won’t be d’Lanville. Ho, ho! It will be—Death!”

“Yes,” roared the rabblement, and behold, the bridegroom cometh, with his best man—the headsman! Ha, ha! Ho, ho!”

“And the Bourbon princess fears them both! Ha, ha! Ho, ho!” laughed the Jezabel. “She is afraid of her bridegroom—afraid of ——”

“I, a Bourbon, afraid of anything?” spake the girl, steadily, calmly, grandly in that sovereign hour of her fate. “I fear Death? *Never!* for where Death is, I am not, and where I am, Death is not!”

Then, baring her neck for the knife, she submitted to the headsman; the guillotine clicked, and her head rolled into the basket.

WILL HUBBARD KERNAN.

The Nun

WE were children together, and played beneath the trees and in the lush grass of the meadow, and dabbled in the running brook. I remember well how white were her slender feet.

As youth and maiden, then we strolled beneath the trees, and plucked the flowers in the fields, and listened to the music of the purling brook. And then, one night when the moon was out, and the soft breath of summer was on the land, we rested together in a vine-clad arbor, and her fair head lay upon my shoulder.

Some meddler found us there—and they sent her away.

That was long ago.

But last night, as I strolled about the outskirts of the town, I came suddenly upon a high wall, enclosing a garden. It minded me much of the garden where *we* played, when children together.

I heard the sound of voices behind the wall—the voices of women, and one of them wakened strange chords of memory that had long slept; there are some things one never quite forgets.

A peach tree grew against the wall. One branch hung down, but was barren, and I could see that luscious fruits grew further up. I caught the barren branch, and drew myself slowly up the wall. The women ceased their talk when they saw me, and one laughed and ran away. But the other darted a glance from her black eyes that gave me a sore wound.

To-night there will be no moon, and while the village sleeps, I will return, and pluck the peach that I missed yester'een.

JAMES KNAPP REEVE.



His Little Boots

THIS Christmas morning I will see his grave again. A year ago I took the snow from off the little mound, and brushed away some dead leaves that had fallen there. I think there was a tear dropped on the grave as I bent over it, and there were tears upon my cheeks as I came away. And when I entered the house again, how quiet it seemed without the patter of his little feet, and his little cry of welcome!

There on the mantel are his little boots—his first and only pair. I put them there, with my own hands, the night before he died.

Dear little boots! How I have looked at them, and how *she* has taken them in her hands and kissed the stiff, black things, and shed her tears upon them. How his little eyes did shine with joy and happiness when I brought them home. How the red tops and bright copper toes enchanted his little heart.

Dear little boots! On the mantel there, though wrapped in silence, they seem to speak sweet and tender words to me. I love them because he wore them. And she loves them even more than I, for every morning she kisses them, and every morning she wipes away her tears.

Dear little boots! The kingdoms of the world could not buy them! they are sweet memories of our dead boy. His little boots! Even now I hasten to touch them again with my rough fingers, and the tears are falling fast upon his little boots.

WILL M. CLEMENS.

A Lost Letter

[An extraordinary document discovered in Boston, evidently written by a New York Knight of the Tenderloin to a French lady of uncertain age.]

VENDOME HOTEL, New York.

Ma chere vieille fille (Can this mean "dear old girl"?):

C'est une salle neusance que je suis obligé d'être ici mais je serais éloigné seulement deux ou trois jaur. Come je mangue vous. Vous etes si gai et etounaut. J'ai entendue dire par un ami de moi que vous etieziet la plue jolie petite Marguerite dans New York, et, encore vous etes Francaise et ne comprends pas Anglais ansi que toute le monde ne peub pas mentoné vous. Vous savez ie ne puis pas secaurs d'être jaloux car il n'y à pas de vraie amour sans jalousie. Si vaus plait peusez de moi et ne flirtez pas avec des autres car je suis aucunfou et it serait un froid jaur quand je suis laissé et ne pas vous aubliez ca. Je suis venue ici seulement pour tirror le jambe du vieux homme (mon pere) pour attrapper du bootle pour que nous puissions avoir un leon haute vieux temps ensemble quand je revieus à New York. Je vous aime comme, oh, comme le blue flammes, mais il est, difficile pour moi de mettez ça en Francais. It yà un poet, le Lord Tennyson, qui est un enfer d'un poet. Il a ecrit des vers au taur dune fille nounné Lillian qui voudrait aller bien pour comme une ficelle. Ceci sont les vers ie les traduis.

Airé fairé Lillian,
Voltant plairant Lillian,
Quand je demand si elle m'aime
Jaint ees petites mains au dessus de moi
Elle ne veut pas me dire si elle me aime
Cruelle petite Lillian.

C'est comme ça que vous portez vaus avec moi.
Je vaus aime toujours come tartine.

Votre

—————
H. SAINT MAUR.

The Journal

THE logs in the fire-place sizzled and hissed and crackled merrily as little tongues of flame curled round and about them.

Bright sparks flew up the chimney and were lost in the darkness. The clock on the mantle-piece ticked in dull monotonous tones. Strange lights and shadows danced among the silent furniture, and were reflected in the polished floor.

The background was a mass of mysterious blackness throwing into relief the figure of a woman.

Her gray hair was turned to silver; her proud, firm mouth looked less rigid in the firelight.

She held a book clasped closely in her white fingers. They looked very white against her black gown. She stepped forward with a swift marvelous grace, and dropped the book among the logs where the blaze was brightest.

For a moment it was darker, then she leaned forward eagerly watching the stealthy tongues of fire curl about the covers and steal into the closely written pages.

Page after page of a life's history the hungry flames devoured. Was there a sweet dream of happiness never fulfilled? Was there disappointment—anguish and remorse?

The world shall never know.

Only the little heap of ashes remains.

She turns away with a sigh, and a half-weary gesture of pain. Her eyes grow dim, and she gropes blindly for her chair. It is over—the life that promised so much. There is only the little future and—eternity.

A. E. BRICKELL.

Spoken

“IT must be late,” she said, rising from the low chair beside the shaded lamp, and going toward him. She, a woman of thirty; he, a man past middle life, with that unmistakable color that tells of the consuming fire of heart disease.

“It must be late; I think I shall retire. Good night”—lingeringly—“good night.”

“Not yet,” he cried, as if starting from a sleep; “not yet! There is something I must tell you.”

“Better not,” she said quietly; then looking at him and putting out her hands as if to ward off a blow, “Do not, do not!”

“Ah, but I must. It is past your controlling, past mine. I will, I must tell you that I love you! Heaven can hold no greater happiness for me than the knowledge that you love me; hell no greater torment than that you do not.

“I do not—love—you!”

He grasped her by the wrists and drew her down until her face was on a level with his own, and his eyes, fierce and dark, gazed fixedly into hers.

“Do you swear it?”

“Hush! Remember her you call by the sacred name of ‘wife,’ and God be my witness, I—love—you—not!”

His grasp upon her loosened, the eyes involuntarily closed as though to shut out some awful reality, his head fell back among the cushions. The slender thread that held his life had snapped.

“I have killed him,” she cried, in a low, strained voice of agony; “killed him! killed him with a *lie!*”

M. G. ROBINSON.

At the Opera

THOUSANDS have come to witness the triumph of La Diva's first night. Every seat is occupied.

Apart from the crowd and close to the orchestra stands a man whose eager eye wanders over the house as if seeking something—someone, yet it never rests even upon the fairest in this sea of faces. There is a searching, hungry look upon his handsome, reckless face, and his hands, thrust into his pockets, finger nervously at some rolls of paper, and clench them fiercely.

The curtain has risen. There is a moment's hush of expectation—a breathless pause, then a tumultuous roar of applause. La Diva has entered. Beautiful, radiant, spiritual, she pours forth her soul in silver ripples of sound. The vast audience is at her feet, rapt, breathless and adoring, full of a mystic sense of sympathy and delight.

The man alone, of all the throng, remains unmoved. He has not even turned his restless eyes from the great audience to the La Diva's face or seemed to note her presence. With the first tone of her voice, indeed, his face lighted with a new expression: was it love? was it admiration? was it pride? was it merely greed? With a last triumphant glance at the multitude of rapt faces attesting the power of La Diva's wonderful voice, he has hastily passed out and away from it all.

As the last notes of La Diva's aria tremble forth to the ears of the spell-bound listeners, with wine-flushed cheeks and the same restless, eager eyes, he is throwing the dice in a gambling hell. He has staked in advance the profits of La Diva's first night. He has staked, and lost, the price of La Diva's beautiful voice.

He is La Diva's husband.

ABBIE FARWELL BROWN.

The Valley of the Dismal Pools

ONCE as in a dream I came into a strange and distant country, and as I wandered on I saw a deep enshrouded valley. I shuddered, for all about me lay pools of water whose surfaces were black, and hideous reptiles and all sorts of creeping things made their homes beneath the slime. And from the pools arose a horrid mist which hung above them like a cloud and made one long black night.

Walking on, I found a rift in the mists and God's bright, pure sunlight poured itself upon the surface of a tiny hidden pool. Small it was, but pure as an angel's tear, and its waters sweet as the first kiss of a lover. From out this tiny pool a thin stream trickled slowly, first into one and then another of the foul and loathsome waters. The reptiles could not live, and sank writhing to the bottom and died. And soon each pool was clarified, the mists ceased rising and passed away, and let in all the brightness, and the blue heavens above were reflected in the waters. And all was light.

And I was sore perplexed that from this one tiny pool should go this power to change and beautify the rest. And as I stood, a voice replied to my unspoken questionings: "These pools, so dark and treacherous, are the souls of men. Evil deeds and wrongs have defiled them. But now you see them changed."

And, pondering on these words, a light broke in upon me; but still remained a good part unexplained. And once again my wonder rose and I cried out: "Explain this tiny pool that has power to make what was so dark, so bright; what was so vile, so pure. Tell me, whose soul is it?"

And the voice all trembling with a quiet joy and gladness whispered in my ear—"A woman's."

W. R. A. WILSON.

A Man and a Woman

THE woman was very young.

In her face one could see a shadow of the beautiful—if one had sharp eyes, for in the deserted room the shimmer of the sun was never seen, and the candle light flickered like a firefly. Her yellow hair was like a wreath around the wan, pinched cheeks. The wasted hands lay stark across the quiet breasts, and at her right, an empty purse, and at her left, a small white plate of dry bread crusts. Abandoned in her poverty—this victim of the streets—hastened away in the night—never to return.

Strange men found her there, long dead, in solitude and darkness, a silver mold upon the faded face, the dew of death upon the saffron hair.

* * * * *

The man was very old.

He was dying of a mental hurt—the doctor said—a pain no human skill could stay, and through the weary hours the sick soul lingered—a toy, a plaything for grim Azrael. Never did the waters of Lethe run quite so slowly. Soft hands bathed the fevered face; rich wine wet the parched lips, and sweet voices dulled his moans of anguish. Then came at last a wild, hoarse cry—a wail that echoed through the room and penetrated every nook—and some eyes were moist and some were turned away. For death was near and gaunt hands were beckoning.

He raised his head and shrieked, and with a froth upon his pallid lips, fell quivering back upon the bed, and silence reigned there with the dead.

* * * * *

For the woman—Peace and heaven.

For the man—Hell and agony.

WILL M. CLEMENS.

Two Ends of a Proposition

(A Draconian Dualogue)

Reginald—"Dolph, I want you to tell me something."

Adolphus—"If it doesn't require long sentences I'll consider the request. If monosyllabic replies will serve, the request is granted."

Reg.—"Don't be a fool——"

Dolph.—"Couldn't if I tried. Go on."

Reg.—"You know what I mean——"

Dolph.—"Don't. Go on."

Reg.—"Suppose an awfully jolly little girl——"

Dolph.—"Can't. The race has died out. Go on."

Reg.—"Confound you, try. I say, suppose such a little girl conveyed in quite a proper way her admiration for you, and her respect for your splendid repose, and—all that sort of thing——"

Dolph.—"You interest me. Go on."

Reg.—"——and then you learned somehow that she had a million, and could settle and fix it just how she liked, and then—and then just dropped on her knees when you were both alone, with the light just right, and the flowers smelling sweetly, everything, don't you know, working right—well, if she just dropped down on both knees, don't you know, in quite a cunning way, and said, 'Dolf dear, I love you. Will you marry me?' What should you say?"

Dolph.—"Go to—— Go on."

Reg.—"Yes; I thought you'd say that; but suppose it was the other way; that *you* had flopped down, and *she* had told *you* to go to——, then what would you do?"

Dolph.—"Marry her. Now get out."

HARRY SAINT-MAUR.

Unmasked

IN a dimly lighted alcove a man, in evening dress, stands peering between the half-drawn portieres into the ball-room beyond.

Strains of a waltz come floating to his ears, but he hears nothing ; he is watching a man and woman going and coming through the mazes of the dance.

Suddenly he turns and sees a stranger beside him gazing into his eyes.

The face is repulsive in its expression of hate and envy.

Involuntarily he recoils a step.

Only then he recognizes his own image in the glass.

ERNEST PEABODY.



The Stranger

THERE came to the colony a young man whose face was unmarked by care and whose blue eyes contained a deep happiness.

The people stared at him, but none thought to offer him lodging. They did not inquire his name nor from what country he had journeyed.

“He is not like us,” said one, and he berated the new-comer with coarse words and threw stones at him.

“Let him alone,” said another; “his odd conceits may serve to make our children laugh”; and he gave to the calm young stranger a gay cap with bells.

But a third said, “This wanderer speaks words which we do not understand. He is mad.”

So they built with great stones a tower, and imprisoned the beautiful stranger, not dreaming that his name was Wisdom and that he had come from their far-away Fatherland.

EMILY B. STONE.

As It Is

THERE was a certain man who had a goodly number of servants, with one placed over them as overseer. They had all served him for years, and he knew, or fancied he knew, each and every one's characteristics. There were the capable, the faithful, the honest, the industrious, the indolent, the tale-bearer, the eye-servant, the Judas; and those who were at their master's beck and call, by day and by night, who were willing to lay down their lives for his sake.

It so happened that the overseer died, and the master set about putting one above his fellows. Passing by the faithful, good and true, he made his way toward the ranks of eye-service, indolence and deceit.

When the appointment was made, the faithful beheld Judas exalted.

WILLIAM FORSYTH.



The Bachelor

HENRIQUE was at liberty to go and come at will. There were no restraints, no critics to approve or disapprove of word or deed. Yet at times there was a feeling of hunger in his heart—a want of woman's love and sympathy.

He often asked himself the question: "Does love pay?" And he would answer, "Yes," when he could see happiness in the future; "No," when with marriage would come every element of misfortune, of discomfort and future disintegration.

He looked upon marriage as a trial, as a beautiful passage through the valley of the shadow—and thus he wavered, fearful of unhappy results on one hand, covetous of a life of joy upon the other.

WILL M. CLEMENS.

Souls Know

OVER the seas there was a poet who believed souls fluttered in the wings of moths. In the final winding of the cocoon they departed to the blest.

Hence, the silk of his robe he called soul's cloth.

The swarthy poet, dressed in blue, sat in his garden on the little hills—down below, the almond blossoms bloom. He smoked three whiffs, and a rest, and thought.

This is what his mind thought: "Man has feeling, hearing, sight, taste, smell—has the soul more?" Light faded as he smoked and thought; two moths flew by, fluttering together. He laid his pipe aside and followed, and caught them upon the ailanthus tree. One he secreted most carefully within his robe; the other placed in the deep bell of a flower, and tied the opening with a silken string. This flower-prison was hung upon the tree.

Then holding close his breast folds that the mate might not escape, took his way down the hill—away, a mile, two miles, into the valley. And stopping where the almond blooms were thickest, released the fragile prisoner on a branch.

Now night had come, and many lamps twinkled through the hills.

The poet stood near and watched the soul. It fanned its wings up and down,—and rested, still. For five good minutes stayed thus; and then, a little quiver ran like a wave along the worm body, the antennæ moved in knowledge, and the soul rose. Slowly, often alighting and waiting as for a signal—at the reception of the spinal quiver, on it went, retracing their course.

And the poet followed, watching by the moon.

As the hills were neared, intervals of rest became less frequent, the wings more bouyant, its course more swift.

It reached the garden long before the "soul-seeker."

When he got to the ailanthus tree there was a neat hole in the purple flower. The two moths clung to the blossom—antennæ mixed, as you would lay your cheek to mine.

“Souls have more,” said the poet, “they *know*.” And he went into the house to dream.

ELEANOR B. CALDWELL.



Youth

HE was old and gray, and was waiting for the summons. Life had been hard; all the way the wind had blown in his face. Yet, now that he was near the end he looked backward and lamented that it was past. He spoke of the restless weary years, the hard paths, the defeats and losses, as though they had been happy years, smooth paths and glad victories. Youth was his again; youth that knows not any fear or dread, but is full of hopes and dreams, and of the glamor of spring. He stood again in the flush of morning; again the dew was on the grass, again the rose of May bloomed for him. The world was new, all fair things and all fleeting things were recreated. He had forgotten the frosts and the snows, but he remembered the violets and the wild flowers pushing their way through the dead leaves in the woods. He spoke of the love that had smiled upon him, of hope that had beckoned him. He talked of youth, the beautiful, the winged; youth that laughs and vanishes. And to those who watched beside him his face seemed almost young again with the strange spectral youth that memory gives back. He whispered softly: “It is mine once more—youth everlasting.” And smiling, he closed his eyes.

CARLOTTA PERRY.

The Panama Railroad

THAT railroad down in Panama was a hard road to build. The tropical fevers slaughtered the laborers by the wholesale. It is a popular saying, that every railroad tie from Panama to Aspinwall rests upon a corpse. It ought to be a substantial road, being so well provided with sleepers—eternal ones and otherwise.

The Panama railroad was an American project, in the first place. Then the English got a commanding interest in it, and it became an English enterprise. They grew somewhat sick of it, and it began to swap back until it became American again. The Americans finished it. It proved a good investment. But the right of way granted by the Columbian States was limited to only a few years. The Americans tried to get the term extended. But they were not particularly popular with the Governments of the Isthmus, and could not succeed. Delegations of heavy guns were sent down, but they could not prevail. They offered a few million of dollars, and Government transportation free. President Mosquera declined. The English saw an opportunity. They made an effort to secure to themselves the right of way whose term was so soon to expire. They were popular with the Isthmian chiefs. They made the Central Governments some valuable presents—gunboats and such things. They were progressing handsomely. Things looked gloomy for the Americans.

Very well; two American gentlemen, who were well acquainted with the Isthmus people and their ways, were commissioned by the Panama Railroad Company, about the time of the opposition English effort, to go down to the Isthmus and make a final trial for an extension of the right of way franchise. Did they take treasure boxes along? Did they take gun boats? Quite the contrary. They took down twelve hundred baskets of champagne and a ship-load of whisky. In three days they had the entire popula-

tion as drunk as lords, the President in jail, the National Congress crazy with delirium tremens, and a gorgeous revolution in full blast! In three more they were at sea again, with the documents for an extension of the railroad franchise to ninety-nine years in their pockets, procured for and in consideration of the sum of three million of dollars in coin, and transportation of Isthmian stores and soldiers over the road free of charge.

That is the legend. I don't know whether it is true, or not. I don't care, either. I only know that the American company had the franchise extended to ninety-nine years, and that all parties concerned were satisfied.

MARK TWAIN.



As in a Dream

THE deacon sat in his high-backed pew, his regular Sunday place. He heard the droning tones of the old parson, and saw the dust-motes floating in the sunshine. He heard, too, the distant lowing of the cattle, the twitter of the birds, the ceaseless babble of the brook. They came to him dreamily, drowsily.

He slept not, but he gave himself over to a delicious, restful languor. He starts, then moves uneasily and looks about. A strange feeling comes over him.

What is it?

It is in his hands, his feet, his head. Ah! and about his heart, too; creeping, crawling, numbing.

He throws off the languor which bound him. His faculties are unusually acute. The parson's words ring out with awful distinctness:

"Prepare to meet thy God."

His mind is quickened. Those words; are they not a message to him, and to him alone that terrible warning?

He shivers. What is it? A thought of death, and there — will that tightening about his heartstrings never cease; that creeping, numbing?

Death, he remembers, comes sometimes that way, crawling on with horrible diligence until it quenches the vital spark, and then —

No! No!

But yet he cannot free himself from the grim arms that encircle him.

Tighter! tighter! tighter!

His eyes close, his muscles become rigid, his jaw drops, his whole frame shivers like a tree tempest-shaken, and then.

And then —

He sneezes.

FRANK M. WEEKS.



The Monks

IF it had been the desire of the founders of the Monastery to place their retreat where all the environments would tend to take the thoughts of the Brothers away from earthly things, and direct them toward heaven, the place was well chosen.

Hundreds of feet sheer down the face of the cliff which it surmounted, a stone could have fallen from the doorway. Then, the vast plain that stretched away beneath was brown and bare, and burned all day beneath the fierce heat of a tropical sun.

If a Brother yielded to the enticement of this prospect, and could not rest content to pace only the worn paths in the rock above, but must place his feet upon this wider plain below, there were two ways of reaching it.

One was—to follow the stone over the cliff's face.

A longer and more toilsome way was to make careful descent by some hundreds of steps that had been cut in the rock centuries before; and, unless one was as sure-footed as the beasts of burden that toiled faithfully up this weary ascent, bringing stores of food and drink to the Brothers, it was sometimes all the same as if one had followed the stone.

So earth was not a tempting place—after one had once come to the top of the cliff.

But the way to heaven was very clear. It was only a flight upward through the blue—some hundreds of feet more, perhaps, than the flight down over the cliff's face.

To be sure, there were some prayers and penances to be done along the way; some nights to be spent upon the knees on the cold stone floors of narrow cells. But it was not difficult—when the end was so sure.

And so, because the Monks were content up there, and came down to earth so seldom from their vantage point up near heaven, their reputation for piety went abroad through the land.

But I have had my doubts. For once, when I had climbed those hundreds of steps cut in the solid rock, and at night found myself close by the gates, I heard sounds of music and laughter; and there were brilliant lights within, and I saw great tuns of wine—and there was the movement of dancing feet, and the sound of voices—the mocking voices of women.

JAMES KNAPP REEVE.



The Execution

THE sheriff fastened the rope about the neck of the unfortunate wretch, and drew down the black cap.

The priest with bowed head muttered a token for the soul of the condemned man.

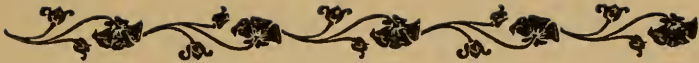
The jailer touched a spring and a quivering body dangled from the scaffold beam.

The doctor heard the heart beat its final throb, and pronounced him dead.

The men severed the rope then, and strong arms laid the lifeless mass in a pine box at the foot of the scaffold.

“Thank you, gentlemen!” the corpse seemed to say, “our little differences are now amicably adjusted.”

WILL M CLEMENS.



A Phantasmal World

I WAS sorry to lose him out of my life. A regretful poignancy filled my breast, but still I submitted without a thought to have it otherwise. Because he was interesting and attractive was reason enough to say "Farewell." I had habituated myself to giving up what pleased me most, for I had resolved to have no more feelings. I would be neither too elated nor too depressed, too happy, nor too despairing. I would dwell upon an even plane where no stirring of feelings should arouse too close a contact with life. I preferred to remain apart—it was my ultimate choice.

And yet, with many other elements to brighten, to cheer, to give a faintly modulated pleasure that should avoid the prosiness of things, I missed that element of pleasant companionship. Why, I hardly questioned. And so I found myself slipping into that depressed stage of feeling. But I would not have it! I would not recall him, not if I could—and that was impossible. What then?

I had a gift—a strange one, but I rarely used it, save unconsciously. To save myself I would use it deliberately. This gift was an inheritance from an Oriental ancestor, traced back to Persia—one of those turbaned sages who had all the arts at his command. It had descended to me with my love for sandal wood and fire-worshiping and sunworshiping tendencies. I had the art of creating phantasms of those who lived, and in my dreams drew them thither, and, constructing a plane

of dream-existence, talked and mingled in a social way, under the laws of the phantasmal.

And so in my dream I came in and found him there in a world of his own. It was a dull place, four great, dark walls enclosing him. But the radiation of his mind, like rays of thought, had warmed into life odd little germs of growth. And there all about him were delicate little purple blossoms springing thickly. And they had grown from his brain, though he knew it not. But I could not stay. I must go. Then the noon hour came when he might escape from the thrall for a little time. The great bell sounded twelve, and he went forth for a free breath from out those gloomy walls. And I was free and had no walls. For I was an Indian girl upon my pony, cantering along at a delightful pace, free as the wind.

And I came to a cross-roads, and lo ! he was riding, too, and we met and exchanged a word. But conventional laws prevailed in this my phantasmal world, and though I longed to turn my Indian pony round and canter his way, yet I only smiled and passed him by, and went upon my way, and he upon his. Then I heard the great bell ringing again, and saw him once more file, behind all those other prisoners, seeking once again his prison-house.

And I seemed to know how his heart burned to be free, how he beat the wings of his soul against his prison bars, but the work of the world held him fast. And I yearned over him, but could never break through the laws, even of my phantasmal, and tell him so.

Thus we parted—and I was satisfied. For I know that more would destroy that even tenor of my mind that desired neither depression nor elation—but dead, even calm.

ELLA STERLING CUMMINS.

The Legend of the Cross



"AND EVERYWHERE THE PRINTS OF THE FEET OF HIS PARENTS."

AFTER Adam was banished from Paradise he lived a life of penitence and chastity to atone in part for his past transgressions. As he waxed old and felt death approaching, he called Seth and said: "Go, my son, to the terrestrial Paradise and ask the Archangel who keeps the gate to give me a balsam to save me from death. The way you cannot mistake, for my feet scorched the earth as I left Paradise."

As Seth hastened along he found the vegetation scanty and everywhere the prints of the feet of his parents. As he neared the gate of Paradise, nature revived; the air

was laden with odor of flowers and the song of birds. Entranced, half bewildered at the changed aspect of everything, he nearly forgot his mission, when suddenly he beheld the flaming sword of the angel who guards the gate. The celestial being read the inmost thoughts of Seth, and the favor his lips refused to utter.

"The time of redemption has not yet come," the angel said, "but as a token of future pardon, the wood whereon redemption shall be won shall grow from the tomb of thy father. I give you now three seeds taken from the tree whose roots are in Hell, and whose fibres penetrate the body of Cain, as though they were endued with life as he endeavors to clasp them to clamber into Paradise. The branches of



"HE BEHELD THE FLAMING SWORD OF THE ANGEL WHO GUARDS THE GATE."



"BENEATH THE TREE DAVID SAT
BEMOANING HIS SINS."

this tree reached to Heaven and are covered with flowers and fruit." Then the cherub ceased and seemed to be gaining strength for one last command: "When Adam is dead," he continued, "place these three seeds in his mouth and bury him."

When Seth returned, Adam praised God for what his son told him, and on the third day he died.

In course of time three trees grew from the seeds brought from Paradise; one a pine, another a cypress and one a cedar. They grew with prodigious force, and it was one of these boughs that Moses performed his miracles with, bringing water out of a rock, and healing those whom a serpent had slain.

After awhile the three trees incorporated themselves into one trunk, and beneath this tree David sat bemoaning his sins.

In Solomon's time this tree surpassed all the trees of Lebanon, and when the son of David erected his palace, he cut down this tree for the main pillar to support his roof. The tree refused to serve such a purpose, and shot up and pierced the roof. Astonished and vexed at the resistance of an inanimate thing, he threw it over Cedron that all might trample on it, as they crossed the brook. The Queen of Sheba found it here and Solomon had it buried, and dug at its roots the pool of Bethesda, which healed the sick and restored sight to the blind. When the time of the crucifixion of Christ drew near, the wood rose to



"HE CUT DOWN THIS TREE
FOR THE MAIN PILLAR."

the surface, and the executioners, seeking a suitable beam, found it, and on it hung the Savior. After the crucifixion it was buried on Calvary and was found by Empress Helena, deep in the ground with two others. Then it was carried away by Chosroes, King of Persia, but was recovered by Heraclius, who defeated him in a battle, which, to this day, is commemorated as the Feast of the Exaltation.

Such is the legend of the cross: a wierd fancy that has followed us down the ages, until to-day it is as an ungrateful friend which we would put from us but may not.

RUTH WARD KAHN.



Faith Renewed

HOW good it is, when the mist has hung heavy all the day and the dismal drops have splashed down from roof and tree, to see once more the blue hill tops against the grey sky and to have the fog roll away like a dark shadow of sorrow. It is as when, in a foul little shop, smelling of cheese and old leather, the men sit with their pipes around the stove and tell low tales and laugh. Then suddenly the door opens and there enters a tall grey-eyed girl, and all the men rise and stand abashed, and the place grows light and clean.

HERBERT WARE.

The Perversity of Love

ONE day Love dropped an arrow from his quiver. A short, stout, little lady picked it up, and with many blushes returned it to its owner.

“Ah! Sweetheart!” said Love, “you shall have your reward,” and he shot the arrow at a man who was passing.

And the man, alas! was tall and slim.

ERNEST PEABODY.



Answered

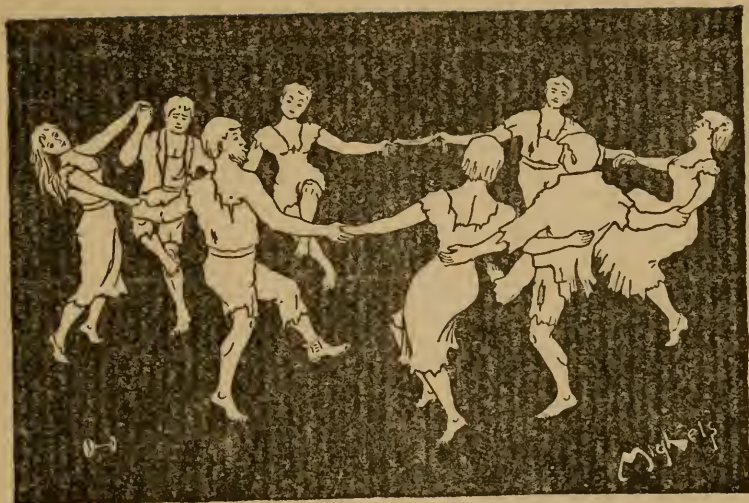
A GIRL sat by the sea, and the moan of the waters crept into her heart, and filled it with a mighty longing.

Across the sands came a man, and in the moonlight he was good to look upon. As he drew near the girl, his face was bright; he held out his hand to her, and his eyes were tender and questioning.

She gave him her hand, and as his lips met hers, she thought, “There can be no more longing, my life is filled.”

Then joy possessed her for a season, but when the glamor of the moonlight had faded, she found her life filled—but with pain!

CLAUDIA STUART COLES.



The Island of Wine

WITH a throat which felt as if it were baked like the top of an alkali desert, for want of moisture, a shipwrecked man dragged himself ashore on an island. And in the unconscious state which followed his blistered lips whispered,

“Water, water!”

Upon awaking, his ears were ravished by a melody—the inimitable harmony of a ripple-sounding brook. Desperately and painfully he crawled to it.

How full of green mirrorings the pool!

Blinded with joy he plunged his whole head in and drank—as if to drain the fountain of it; drank, drank, and then recoiled, shuddering.

The stream was wine—blood colored!

He moaned in disappointment and covered his eyes with his nervous hands, but his life was saved. Swaying he rose to his feet and dived into the forest of ferns and trees, seeking for water—seeking and ever finding the brink of the red wine-river.

It was night when he came upon a settlement. Sounds of revelry issued from squalid huts, and hazy light escaped through dirty windows and struggled weakly with the darkness. A place was filled with half-animal beings, masquerading as men and women. They were nearly nude, and were reeling in the squirmings of a hideous dance. The faces of these things were distended disgustingly, and were raw-meat hued; their eyes were bleared and shot with blood; their lips protruded and were dry and cracked. The air reeked with the fumes of alcohol with which the creatures were saturated. And a barbarous, drunken strain it was to which they gyrated wildly.

He who had come accosted the besotted dispenser of liquor—

“Water—give me water!”

“Water?” echoed the soaked demon, and he croaked grinningly, while a shadowy something, like the half-recollection of a name long unused, flitted across his eyes—

“No water here—have some wine?”

“No water?”

“No, *never!*—on the Island of Wine.”

“The Island—the hell upon earth,” groaned the stranger, rushing forth.

Dawn came, the sun shone hotly, things issued from the huts, overrunning the unclean streets. Males, females, offspring, wobbled about—all with eyes inflamed—all with bloated, red visages—all smoking with the fumes of wine. Little and big drank against perpetual thirst.

Wine only was in their wells, springs, streams ; it gushed from rude troughs—spouted from living rocks. No clouds came rain-laden, but lurid mists gathered in the murky air and torrents of wine were poured from them.

The man fled to the ocean. And he toiled and wrought furiously to construct a crude apparatus in which to distill the salt water. Always he seemed to die for water.

At last ! His fire burned, the brine bubbled in his still—drop by drop the clear product fell into his cup. He dared not look ; he was frenzied.

When the receptacle was half filled he snatched it madly. Quivering in every atom of him he raised it to his mouth——

A voice broke on his ear——

“ Oh, John, I ought to scold you—you have been drinking again—but here, this is water, dear.”

PHILIP VERRILL MIGHELS.



The Lullaby

The mystic crooning of the hoary sea,

Borne on the southwind through the brooding night,
Seems like a cradle song of God to me ;

The old, old song, unchanged through years of years,
Bidding me slumber on, nor dream of fears,

Till dawn shall rise, and night's thin phantoms flee,

And He once more shall say, “ Let there be light ! ”

C. F. LESTER.



“Jem”

THE sun was setting behind the rolling waves of the prairies. Its long, level rays blinded Lize Milton as she stood in the doorway of her cabin; she shaded her eyes with her hand and looked across the yellow plain. Four days before her husband had gone to the Settlement to sell a calf.

“Likely I’ll be back termorro’ at sundown,” he had said, as he tightened a rope on his saddle; “mebbe the bizniz’l take longer tho’, so don’t be skeered ef I don’t come.”

Lize had waited and watched for three nights. “Well, he ain’t a comin’ ternight,” she muttered, as she turned away from the door; “I s’pose he’ll be here termorro’.”

She took the coffee and fried hoe cake from the fire, and ate her supper, then fastened the door and, leaning her husband’s gun against the bed, slept until daylight. Every night at sunset she watched. A week later she stood in the doorway shading her eyes, in which there had grown a curious, restless look. When the sun had gone she turned away.

“Well, it ain’t ternight, either.”

In the house the hoe cake sputtered in the pan, the coffee filled the air with its aroma. The table stood in the middle of the room with Jem’s cup and plate; his chair stood by it. A few moments after Lize had fastened the bar across the door, she heard a low whining noise outside; opening the door she saw Jem’s dog crouching

by the step. He crawled into the room and lay at her feet. She stepped out into the darkness and called, "Jem, Jem." There was no answer. "What'er you doin' here 'thout Jem?" But the dog only whined.

Out on the prairie, a hundred miles from his home, Jem was lying, dead. He had lost his way, his horse was dead, and, without food, without water, he had fallen on the hard, dry earth; as the sun went down, while Lize was standing in the doorway watching for him, he moaned, "I said I'd be home at sundown, Lize—oh, Lize." A few more groans, a few more hot gasping breaths, and the end came. In a short while the prairie dogs were howling around him, and the next day the crows found all that the beasts had left, and soon there were only the bones and rags which had been torn from him before he was cold in death.

Four weeks later Lize stood by her door and watched the sun go down. The restlessness had left her eyes, but a dull unseeing look had taken its place. Every night she had watched and waited, but no living thing had appeared on the desolate plain.

"He won't come ternight," she muttered, and was turning away, when a man who had been standing behind the brushwood fence stepped out.

"Could yer give me somethin' to eat? I've ben a walkin' all day 'thout food."

"Yer kin hev Jem's supper, he ain't a comin' ternight," the woman answered. When he had eaten it, she told him that he might sleep in the outhouse. The next morning after she had given him some milk and boiled corn, she said:

"I ought ter get the corn in; Jem would a had it don' ef he'd ben here. But he'll likely come ternight."

The man offered to help her, and they worked together in the little patch of corn all through the long

hot day. Lize prepared the supper, and again stood watching for Jem. When the red sun had disappeared she said:

“Jem won’t be here ternight; yer kin hev his supper.”

The next day was the same, and the next, and as the days and weeks went on the man worked on the clearing; the woman watched and waited for Jem, and, out on the prairie, under the scorching sun, and under the cold moon, some white bones lay bleaching on the yellow sand.

KATHRYN JARBOE.



As It Was in the Beginning

A CHILD stands at an open window. Outside a mist hangs in heavy folds upon the earth. Now and again a light breeze tosses it aside, revealing for a moment the dripping branches of the nearest tree. The child sees and smiles. He is thinking of the mist.

* * * * *

Years pass; many, many years. Oh! the storms; the sunshine. Oh! the strife; the love; the hate.

* * * * *

An old man sits at an open window looking out at the gray mist that hangs in heavy folds upon the earth. In the distance is heard the hum of the hidden world. The old man sighs and turns wearily away. But he is thinking of the mist.

ERNEST PEABODY,



The Complaint of Fifine

A Monsieur:

Monsieur le redacteur du (ah, pardon ; que je suis bête ; je veux dire)

MONSIEUR :—Permit me, a stranger on your lovely land, to address to you a complaint of the last gravity.

I am a French maid (cameriste, that is), and I assure you that I know my affaire. I was hire to attend Madame Van Rellem, lady of the first world, at their house, perfectly known of all society on Fifth avenue en ville. Monsieur, the husband of madam, is pretty good, but he commence to carry some stomachs, and he have the air of a man who live sufficiently well in his time. There is one son, a gentle small one, who has advanced the sixteen. He was not at all bad ever ; now he is a little master—my word of honor. When I was a month at the house, one morning Monsieur Van Rellem knock at my door quite of good hour. He call out—“Fifine,” that is my name—“I want to speak to you !”

Mon Dieu, I was well embarassed. I arrange my *camisole* a little ; I throw a comb at my hair ; I open the door.

“How is there that I can serve Monsieur ?”—I ask with my smile and my look of fright I do so well. Upon my word, he came right in and he commence.

“See here, Fifine, I want to have a little chat with you. You’ve noticed my boy ? He’s a great boy. Now I want him to speak the French language like a native, so he’ll enjoy Paris when he gets there. Now you know a thing or two ; all French women do. I want him to get

up a flirtation with you, and you make him think I'd raise *enfer*"—that absolutely was his word—"if I knew. See? That'll make him talk to you every chance he gets, and in six months he'll know French like a native, and it'll make a man of him." "But madame, my mistress?"—I gasp—"and, he knows no French. The first lessons shall not be amusing for me!" "Oh, if he takes after his father he'll learn fast enough with such a teacher—and you get a bill for a hundred from me every month, and here's your first in advance"—and behold! he throw a note for one hundred dollars on the bed, get himself to the door, wink, and—is gone!

That is three months a half since, and I AM DISCHARGE! Figure to yourself why? That man Van Rellem send for me and he say:—"See here! What in thunder have you been doing with that boy of mine?"

"That which you have ask me. I have him instructed in French——" "Instructed him? Well I just guess you have. Why he knows a heap more than I do. I'm not going to have a son of mine knowing more French than his father ever did or ever can—now. You can get right out, Miss Fifine."

Is not that shameful? Will you not publish me this?

With all marks of my profound consideration, I am, dear Monsieur Editeur, your all devoted,

FIFINE BAISEE.

P. S.—John, the manservant English, who was over there, have correct for me the spelling of this, but I have not willed that he the composition should change.

HARRY SAINT-MAUR.





The Optimist

JEANNETTE trusted in the men and women all about her, placed her confidence in every one and everything, saw good come forth from haunts where only evil reigned, and all within the compass of her existence, to her, was sweet and pure.

With those rare creatures who sometimes mingle with the world, whom we call optimists, she often sang the song of beauty and of love.

She saw

“More light
Than darkness in the world.”

Her eyes were quick

“To catch the first radiance of the dawn,
And slow to note the cloud that threatens storm.”

The fragrance and the beauty of the rose delighted her. The sweet music of the lark's clear song hovered longer near her than the night hawk's cry. Even amid the sorrows and the pain of life, she found a rapture

“Linked with each despair
Well worth the price of anguish.”

She could detect more good than evil in humanity. She claimed that love was always conquering over hate, and that all men grew better as the world grew old.

WILL M. CLEMENS.



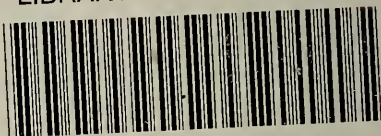








LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 017 401 756 6



Sixty and Six